WORKS IN PROGRESS

Volume 21, No. 1 | SERVING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY OF OLYMPIA SINCE 1990 | May 2010

Say it ain't so, Joe!

Joe Hyer resigns from the Olympia City Council over marijuana bust

by Mike Coday

People for Joe Hyer announced on April 9th that Joe Hyer was resigning from the Olympia City Council effective April 10, 2010. Hyer was arrested on February 17, 2010 on three charges of selling marijuana from his home. Filings in the marijuana felony cases suggest that Hyer believes he may have been entrapped by a "trusted political mentor" who has not been identified further at this time. Hyer pled not guilty to the charges on March 9, 2010. Recent filings in the case indicate that Hyer has struck a deal with the prosecutor for a guilty plea on one felony count related with special enhancements dropped in the plea. State law requires that public officials convicted of a felony lose the public office. The guilty plea could lead to a six month jail sentence for Hyer.

In a case that reeks of prosecution with political motivations, no further information regarding the confidential informant and/or trusted political mentor has been available to date. Is it too soon to start thinking about who could get appointed to fill Hyer's seat and how that plays into the possible political motivations behind the confidential informant and the others who worked to get us to this point?

As yet another political backdrop to Joe's legal troubles, Initiative I-1068 is hoping to get on the ballot and be passed in November, 2010. If I-1068 is passed, the crimes behind Hyer's arrest and prosecution would no longer be criminal under Washington State Law.

If I-1068 is passed, the crimes behind Hyer's arrest and prosecution would no longer be criminal under Washington State Law.

What follows is an interview with Justin Kover regarding Initiative I-1068. Justin is the SW Washington Coordinator for the I-1068 campaign and a past candidate for Mayor of Tumwater.

Mike Coday: *What is the background for I-1068? Why did it get organized and registered for this election cycle?*

Justin Kover: I-1068 was the brainchild of Douglas Hiatt, Jeff Steinborn, Ric Smith, Vivian McPeak, and Philip Dawdy. While watching the Rose Bowl this year and discussing the state of marijuana legislation in Washington, it was abundantly clear that good marijuana law has only been achieved through the initiative process. The result of this discussion was the draft version of Initiative 1068, the Marijuana Reform Act.

Mike: *How does it fit with the legal background for marijuana in Washington State?*

Justin: I-1068 would be an expansion of marijuana law to full state-level legalization with a few caveats, like maintaining smart penalties for providing to children and DUI (driving under the influence). In 1998 Washington voters approved I-692, which allowed people with chronic or terminal illnesses to use and possess medical marijuana. Legislation has followed over the last decade, resulting in RCW 69.51A, our current medical marijuana statute. The biggest misconception is that medical marijuana is "legal." This is not so; being a medical marijuana patient is an "affirmative defense," which means you must argue in court that you need medical marijuana. Different law enforcement agencies have approached this in different ways, creating a sense of injustice throughout the state as investigations and penalties are meted out in variable ways. This is due to the cloudiness of the law itself, which not only causes sick patients to endure search and seizure before they may use their affirmative defense, but allows possession without a legal apparatus to obtain medicine. The law implies that patients may produce their own medicine, but does not spell it out in the statute, causing the sources of legal medicine to exist on tenuous legal ground. This injustice is the source of fervor of the patients and their comrades who engage in medical

▸ **MARIJUANA,** continued on page 8

Check out our 20 year retrospective, starting on Page 11 !

The Peoples' Movement Assembly

Collaboration, networking, and solidarity

by Lee Durfey

All too often, those working toward social justice become overwhelmed by the challenges involved in confronting complex issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty, and sustainability. The problem, as many of us are aware, is that there are too many worthy causes out there, and little time available to individuals to make a real, lasting impact. As a result, many of us are forced to choose from among a myriad of equally important issues while others may attempt to become involved in too many projects at once, eventually burning out. However, the majority of us become so overwhelmed with work, school, raising children, and simply surviving that we are forced to abandon our efforts at social reform completely. In an effort to bridge the gap between related issues and to further strengthen existing efforts for social change, a People's Movement Assembly (PMA) is currently being organized in Olympia with the goal of bringing together activists, organizations, and those who wish to get involved.

Networking and coalition building efforts, such as the PMA, allow us to see the interconnectedness of such social justice issues, which in turn help to facilitate a better understanding of the need for mutual support among community organizers. When we help each other plan, fund, or put on an event, the pressure is lessened on the organizers. Simply attending an event shows that you support their efforts, even if you don't have time to work on it yourself. Such acts of solidarity will help us all succeed, while at the same time building a more effective activist community in Olympia. The PMA seeks to create an opportunity for organizers and activists to meet face to face in order to share knowledge, ideas, and resources while creating solid bonds among existing organizations.

The PMA will feature workshops which cover a diverse range of topics, including veteran's rights, local sustainability efforts, healthcare, feminism, the economy, alternative transportation, Latin American policies, the state budget, participatory budgets, Palestine/Israel, legal rights, alternative media, environmental justice, and local, sustainable food choices. Presenters will give a brief introduction on the topic, followed by a facilitated discussion with the goal of allowing time for everyone to contribute to the conversation. Note takers will then bring the ideas of our community to the upcoming U.S. Social Forum in Detroit, MI. (More info at ussocialforum.org and ussf2010.org.) In this way, we hope to give a voice to those who cannot afford the trip to Detroit. Social justice groups will also have tables set up to allow interested community members to learn more about their activities and get involved. Free childcare will be provided all day, and interested parents are asked to give 48 hours notice, although none will be turned away.

As part of the PMA, the first Olympia Really Really Free Market of 2010 will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., creating a space for the free exchange of household items, books, toys, clothing, and other things you don't need but that someone else can use. Please share what you can, including skills, music, and/or your favorite games. The Oly RRFM seeks to offer an alternative to the over-consumption and capitalism that dominates our society while creating a fun environment to meet people in the community. Everyone is welcome to attend, and no money or trading is involved (more info at rrfmolympia.blogspot.com).

The Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace is sponsoring the People's Movement Assembly and would like to invite all who are interested to attend our upcoming meeting, which will be held at the Olympia Community Center on April 28 at 7 p.m. If you have any questions or suggestions, would like to table with your group, or if you would like to use the free childcare that will be provided, please visit our website at omjp.net. Those interested in attending are urged to invite their friends and any social justice organizations they know of to come make their voices heard. Only by working together in order to build the strength of our respective movements can any of us be successful, and this will only happen with your help.

Go to page 5 for the complete intinerary for the Peoples' Movement Assembly

Lee Durfey is currently an undergraduate student attending The Evergreen State College. He is an active member of Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, the Mideast Solidarity Project, and the Olympia Coalition for a Fair Budget. He is also active in planning the Olympia Really Really Free Market. Lee can be reached at durlee05@evergreen.edu.

Works In Progress

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

Works In Progress is committed to stories misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media. We value local, well-researched news stories, accounts of personal experience and reflections by local authors. Opinion pieces, also valued, are often best supported by facts, examples, and sources, and we encourage writers to include these elements to submissions. We also print some downright crazy and silly stuff, so send us your gonzo stories and push the boundaries, if you dare.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, *it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *olywip@gmail* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

> WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

Mission Statement

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. *Works In Progress* is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues

Some issues are held in the Timberland Library system. *WIP* is archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

Workers In Progress

Colby Batts
"Theory of Bloom" Berryhill
Janet Blanding
Dave Campbell
Marylea Coday
Mike Coday
Renee Cruickshank
Wally Cuddeford
Christian DesMarets
Brendan Funtek
Ben Gus
Teresa Jennings
Margaret Love
Joshua Neuhouser
hali panneton
Sandia Slaby
Sylvia Smith
Jeff Sowers
Pat Tassoni
Ryan Tompkins
Berd Whitlock
Scott Yoos
and room for more...

Page 1 masthead: Illustration by Al Zimmerman

Front cover: Photos by Berd Whitlock

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:
May 21
PO Box 295
Olympia WA 98507
olywip@gmail.com
www.olywip.org

Proofreading:
May 28
(Be there for the first read!)

Advertising Rates

253-225-1769

7.25″ x 4.75″	. . . $125
4.75 x 4.75″	. . . $83
3.0″ x 4.75″	. . . $52
4.0″ x 2.25″	. . . $34
3.5″ x 2.25″	. . . $30
2.25″ x 2.25″	. . . $20

[4 months for the price of 3]

*** Special non-profit rates***

Works In Progress

Any dictator would admire the uniformity and obedience of the US media. N Chomsky

Subscriptions: ○ Individual. $35
○ Low Income . . .$15
Donation: ○ _____

Support progressive journalism.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507

Announcements and events

CIELO benefit concert

Saturday, May 1, 7:00 p.m.
Capitol Theater, downtown Olympia

World and acoustic music fans in the Pacific Northwest will have the opportunity to see the Celso Duarte Sextet, from Cuenavaca Mexico, at 7:00 pm Saturday May 1, 2010, in their only West Coast performance at the historic Capitol Theater in downtown Olympia. From Olympia, the band travels to New York City where they will perform at the prestigious Carnegie Hall.

Funds raised will help CIELO. CIELO was founded in 1996 by a dedicated group of Latina women with a specific focus on services to the Latino/a community. It is located at Radio Ranch, which is owned by Cook Brothers Educational Foundation.

Ground Zero: Abolish nuclear weapons

Sunday, May 2, 1:30 p.m.
Seattle University

Come to a rally and march on Sunday, May 2, 2010, from Seattle University to Waterfront Park, to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The events will coincide with demonstrations around the world demanding that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review, which begins at the United Nations on May 3, set a firm date and implementation plan for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Seattle rally will begin at 1:30 p.m. on May 2, at Seattle University's Quad, which is in the center of campus, two buildings south of the intersection of 10th Ave. and East Madison Street. At 2:30 we will march to Waterfront Park for more music, speakers and leafleting. Participants are invited to bring signs, banners, floats, puppets, balloons, drums and instruments to create a festive atmosphere!

Speakers will include Cherie Eichholz and Dr. David Hall of Physicians for Social Responsibility, Michael Ramos of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, Sr. Jackie Hudson of Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, and Ruth Yarrow of Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation. Reggae artist Adrian Xavier and the Seattle Raging Grannies will sing.

For more information, go to www.gzcenter.org, or contact Jackie Hudson or Sue Ablao begin_of_the_skype_highlighting end_of_the_skype_highlighting at 360-930-8697 or gznonviolencenews@yahoo.com, or contact Anne Hall at 206-545-3562 or annehall@familyhealing.com.

Olympia Free Clinic benefit show

Friday, May 7, 8 p.m.,
The Northern, 321 4th Ave, downtown Olympia

For the past year, a group of Olympians have been hard at work to fill the gap left when the Lacey Neighborhood Free Clinic closed last spring. We are aiming to open a new free clinic by July 2010 - we're currently engaged in the work of establishing our bylaws, projecting budgets, and researching potential locations.

The problem, at this point, is that we need MONEY. You can't get grants until you're legally a 501(c)3 organization, and you can't become that until you have over $700. Which is where you, and a bunch of great local musicians, come in. On May 7th, we will be throwing a fabulous benefit show at the Northern featuring Margy Pepper, Calvin Johnson, and the Next Door Neighbors. And stick around after, because there will be a dance party with DJ Luuva J!

There is a sliding scale cover of $5-$15 - please pay what you can, because this is a great cause in addition to a night of great music!

Playback Theatre performance: Stories of New Lands

Friday, May 14, 7:30 p.m.
Traditions Cafe, 300 5th Ave. SW, Downtown Oly
(Bilingual performance - English and Spanish)

Playback Theatre is a spontaneous collaboration between performers and audience. People tell moments from their lives, then watch them re-created with movement, music and dialogue

Each month we invite a guest artist, community organization, arts program or social service agency to be a part of our performance. Through this collaboration we acknowledge and honor the work individuals and organizations do in our community.

This month's performance, "Stories of New Lands," is hosted in collaboration with CIELO (Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia), a non-profit volunteer organization whose mission is to be a force for justice by serving the self-sufficiency and empowerment of the Latino/a and other underserved communities in Thurston, Mason and Lewis counties.

2010 Synergy Conference

May 17 - 22
The Evergreen State College

The Synergy Conference is a local event with a global message. The mission is simple; the integrations of diverse aspects of life into a sustainable model for our society's future. The event was introduced because the founding groups and individuals believed in combining issues of culture, design, ecology, agriculture and social justice and critically analyzing their interconnectedness. The goal of the events is to create a collective vision and model of sustainability.

Synergy is a four-day conference that is funded by the students through their activities fees when registering as well as by donations. Most events are free to the public.

For the complete schedule of events, visit blogs.evergreen.edu/synergy/schedule-of-events/

BRICK May Day Hoe Down

Saturday, May 22, 7:00 p.m.
Urban Onion Ballroom, downtown Olympia
(116 Legion Way, SE)

Break out your dancin' boots! BRICK's seventh annual May Day Hoe Down is comin' to Olympia! Join us in celebrating workers' rights and radical labor history with live radical country and bluegrass music, square dancing, games, a raffle, and special guest DJ Okie spinning country greats. Also, for the first time, a bar (for those 21 and older), hosted by the Urban Onion Ballroom. And as always, this BRICK tradition is free to everyone.

BRICK is Building Revolution by Increasing Community Knowledge, a radical student organization at South Puget Sound Community College. Find them on Facebook.

Permaculture revolution workshop

Tuesday, May 25, 7:00 p.m.
Traditions Cafe, downtown Olympia

How to Grow All Your Own Produce in 2 1/2 Years: A (r)Evolution Disguised as Organic Gardening is an introductory permaculture presentation by Marisha Auerbach In the Maritime Northwest.

It is possible to grow all our own produce year-round with limited time to establish a system and limited effort. Marisha Auerbach specializes in converting properties from grass to a perennial forage system. A perennial forage system functions much like a natural ecological system, and yields year-round produce with minimal work. These systems are developed to meet the needs of the inhabitants on site. Marisha provides most of her diet and income from her garden and has surplus produce and crafts to give away and trade for other supplies. $7 - $10 sliding scale suggested donation.

Partners in Health fundraiser

Thursday, May 27, 7:00 p.m.
Traditions Cafe, downtown Olympia

A film and discussion about the work by Partners in Health to build maternity clinics in Rwanda. Proceeds from the event will benefit the efforts by Partners in Health, and their work in Africa.

Community Sustaining Fund - Spring grant cycle deadline

The Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County is pleased to announce our Spring 2010 grant cycle. Grant applications are now available to groups and individuals interested in progressive community oriented activities. The deadline for submitting grant applications is Friday, May 7th, 2010. Grant criteria and application forms are available on request from Traditions Fair Trade (5th and Water St., Olympia); or www.traditionsfairtrade.com.

Coffee Strong needs volunteers!

You'll see a few new faces at Coffee Strong this spring! We are delighted to have Megan and Simon joining the barista crew. Simon adds printing skills to our repertoire; Brendan is our media specialist. Four more volunteers start this next week.

But we need a few more! We are looking for someone to assist with maintaining our new website. A position also exists for someone who is familiar with Quick Books and could assist us with posting financial entries, and creating monthly reports.

WIP Fundraising

We're proud to bring you this goliath-sized anniversary issue. However, this was beyond our standard bugdet. WIPsters will be out in force this summer, fundraising to recover those costs.

Look for us at upcoming events, such as the Dana Lyon concert at Evergreen's Synergy Conference, Sat. May 22, at 1pm.

Also watch for the WIPsters' "Birthday Bake Sale" outside Olympia Film Society showings of the film "The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg & the Pentagon Papers," at the Capitol Theater, on Thurs. May 6 and Fri. May 7.

When you see us, please consider making a donation.

Thank you.

Watch Olympia FOR's TV programs on the Internet

Many people who read *Works in Progress* have not been able to watch the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation's TV programs because they live outside of Thurston County, they don't have cable, or they don't have TV at all. Dennis Mills is posting our TCTV programs to the Internet so people anywhere in the world can watch them. Simply go to: www.olympiafellowshipofreconciliation.blip.tv, click on the link for past episodes, and choose the episode you want to watch. Thus far we have posted more than two dozen of our interview programs, including:

A New Foreign Policy
A Tapestry of Faiths: Interfaith Appreciation Through the Arts
Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers
Amnesty International Works for Human Rights
Citizen Diplomacy: International People-to-People Exchanges
Creative Nonviolence and Iraq's Human Face
Elections: Issues, Not Horse Race
Folk Music's Power for Peace and Justice
From Palestine to Puget Sound: The Olympia-Rafah Mural Project
Health Care Reform: Single-Payer Is the Solution!
Immigration: Bridges, Not Walls
Nonviolence: What It Is and How It Works
Nuclear Weapons
Poverty, Housing, and the Legislature
Re-Thinking the Whole Economy
The "3-Strikes" Laws Are Unjust
The Common Good: Real Democracy vs. the Special Interests
The Death Penalty: An Idea Whose Time Has Gone
Venezuela Update
Voter-Owned Elections: Replace Special Interests' Big-Money Financing

We also have posted three special programs: *The Drug War Roadshow* and *Religion in Wartime (parts 1 and 2)*.

The national FOR's Colombia Program's powerfully informative and entertaining *Drug War Roadshow* shows how the so-called "War on Drugs" hurts Colombian farmers and people in the US. Last August the Olympia FOR produced a performance for Thurston Community Television (TCTV), which aired last fall. Now anyone can watch it – or our other programs – on the Internet. Thanks to the *Drug War Roadshow* cast and the crew, especially Carol Burns who served as studio director and editor, Kerri Griffis who produced it, and Dennis Mills who made it available on the internet.

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson, who produces the Olympia FOR's TV programs (360-491-9093 glen@olympiafor.org) or Dennis Mills (360-867-1487 dennis@olympiafor.org).

County Scientist Reveals Rain Trends

"Not to Scare You, But..."

by Janine Gates

This article is reprinted courtesy of janineslittlehollywood.blogspot.com

About 100 community members packed a room at The Olympia Center Monday night to hear about the very latest local hydrological cycles of Thurston County and its climate impacts on the region. The event was sponsored by Olympia Climate Action and the League of Women Voters, with city and county representatives giving presentations.

The discussion had direct relevance to the city of Olympia's update of its Shoreline Management plan, due to the state in September. City staff held a series of public meetings on the shoreline update in February and March.

The city's Planning Commission formed a subcommittee and has been meeting regularly to discuss issues pertinent to the update.

Cari Hornbein, senior city planner, gave the audience an update of the city's shoreline master plan's progress. The city's presentation to the city's Planning Commission took place on Monday, April 19, and included "early plan language for their review and contemplation," said Hornbein.

Future planning commission meetings on May 3 and May 17th will also review and discuss sections of the draft Shoreline Master Program. Hornbein said a draft will be available for the public to review in about a month to five weeks. Several Planning Commission members were in the audience as well as Olympia City Councilmember Stephen Buxbaum.

Amy Tousley, Planning Commission vice-chair, gave a presentation on the commission's shoreline master plan sub-committee work thus far and encouraged community dialog. Several in the audience questioned the tight timeframe in which the document needs to be completed.

"It has put us in a crunch," Tousley admitted. "If we don't submit the document to Ecology, what are the ramifications? I don't think we can afford to fail....I am feeling quite pressed."

Thurston Co.'s Hydrogeological Cycles

Nadine Romero, hydrogeologist for Thurston County, gave a well-received Powerpoint presentation featuring the very latest data on rainfall patterns and trends facing Thurston County. Prior to the county, she spent four years with the Squaxin Island Tribe to quantify the region's small rivers, something which hasn't been done in Thurston County since 1948 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

"At the county, for the last three years, I've worked on 70 projects per year, ranging from two to 280 hours of hydrologic analyses. We are putting together quite a big puzzle," said Romero.

"We have 14 precipitation stations, eight stream gauging stations, 80 groundwater monitoring wells which monitor at 15 minute and one hour intervals, the daily average flows and water table maps, figuring out their pulse."

The statistics don't lie. Romero explained, in simple lay-language to the captive audience, the graphs and charts that showed how sensitive our rivers are to precipitation, and given change, how the rivers behave.

What all this data means with regard to climate change is that the average temperature will increase 2.2 degrees by 2020 and sea level rise is expected to reach 22 inches by 2050.

Using National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) data from 1948 - 2010 gathered at the Olympia Airport weather station, trends show that springs are getting wetter, summers are getting warmer, winters and autumns are getting drier.

Out of 18,900 daily precipitation events during this timeframe, Romero mapped out the Top 20 daily extreme rain events and discovered more extremes (greater than 3.5 inches per day) in the last decade than in the previous five decades, and notes a three year cycle in the last decade.

The region experiences an average yearly rainfall of 4.33 feet. That's 86.7 billion cubic feet in total yearly rainfall volume. We measure 35 billion cubic feet every year. She shared information on Salmon Creek Basin, Scatter Creek Basin and Scott Lake flooding, and seven years of data on McLane Creek at the Delphi Bridge.

Plotting huge daily and monthly storm data, Romero determines trends such as the six heavy precipitation patterns which lead to various types of flooding. In October, for example, when it rains more than three inches per day; consecutive daily totals of one inch or more for five days; consecutive monthly totals of more than 15 inches per month. In November 2006, we experienced a 19.68 inch rainfall.

Climate Change and Our Shorelines

What all this data means with regard to climate change, according to the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, is that the average temperature will increase 2.2 degrees by 2020, all seasons will be warmer, sea level rise is expected to reach 22 inches by 2050 and 50 inches by 2100.

Locally, Romero says another significant event could happen sometime between November of 2011 and February of 2012. "These are interesting trends. At the county level, we plan for six inch storms. Not to scare you, but at 2020, 2030, what happens? Are we in for more saturation? " said Romero.

Romero was asked about capturing water in cisterns or rain barrels, clarifying that this excessive rainfall is not necessarily going into our groundwater supply at a time during the year when we need it most. She cited an example in the Tanglewilde subdivision where she went out last December and did soil core samples. The ground, just a few inches below the surface, like many lawns in older subdivisions, was bone-dry.

"It (rain) is running off as surface water....We need to save it, manage it, plan for the future, and be innovative," Romero urged.

Romero said she is scheduled to give the Thurston county commissioners a field trip to local rivers with an explanation of her most recent findings on May 3. "I will create a field trip guide and we'll put that online so you can see what we've shown them," Romero promised. Romero says this information is all brand new and will be placed online on the county website by August.

Impressed by the wealth of information just presented, audience member Sherri Goulet asked Tousley if this information should be formally incorporated into Olympia's update of the comprehensive plan and shoreline master plan. Tousley agreed that it should be, saying, "showing our homework justifies the shoreline designations - to defend our work."

Goulet pressed Tousley if there is a plan to formally incorporate the information. "I don't have a plan myself, but I've taken copious notes tonight," she responded.

For more information on the Shoreline Management plan process and Comprehensive Plan process, go to www.olympiawa.gov/imagine-olympia.com.

www.LokiLoka.com
A free online local directory
Sustaining a culture created by locally-owned businesses, small farms, artistry, community organizations and events
You'll be amazed at what you can find!
Loki Loka

Centralia Square Antique Mall
3 floors to explore ▪ Restaurant ▪ Bookstore
Directions from Olympia
South on Interstate 5
Off at Exit 62 (Factory Outlets)
East on Harrison
Right on Pearl
201 S Pearl & Locust
Open 7 days
10 to 5

LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1993
ORCA BOOKS
509 E. 4th Ave
Olympia, WA 98501
360-352-0123
www.orcabooks.com orca@orcabooks.com

acupuncture is pretty cool.
http://2kensmith.blogspot.com/
923.0826
ken smith, l.ac.

Seattle's "Flag 3" wins lawsuit against Seattle Police

Seattle cop taken off the street

by Nadav Lewkowicz

After three years of legal battles prompted by a fight with cops that never happened, three Olympia, WA anarchists settle out of court in a lawsuit that gave them over $30,000 and gave the City of Seattle one less reckless cop brutalizing people on the streets. Nadav Lewkowicz from the Leatherstocking Collective of Crumm Mountain, NY interviewed Brendan Maslauskas Dunn, a member of the IWW, anarchist and one of the Flag 3.

Read the entire interview, along with WIP's original coverage of Flag 3, at olywip.org

Nadav Lewkowicz (NL): I understand the Seattle's nefarious Flag 3 won their lawsuit against Seattle's finest and the city itself. Can you talk about the background of this case for people who don't know?

Brendan Maslauskas Dunn (BMD): Sure. Well, we actually won back in early December 2009. It was a long, stressful legal battle that spanned over three years. It involved me and two other anarchists from Olympia who were arrested at a World Can't Wait rally in Seattle's Cal Anderson Park in October of 2006. Personally, I was a little reluctant to go to the rally because of the group that put it on but I decided to go last minute and brought an anarcho-syndicalist flag with me. The three of us, Jake Erwin, Ryan Tompkins and myself, were hanging out in the park before the rally with a number of anarchists, SDSers and Wobblies from Olympia and Tacoma, when out of nowhere, two cops with bicycles approached Jake from behind and snatched the flag from him. An argument ensued and when one of the cops in question – Officer Matt Hyra – asked if it was an anarchist flag and someone said "yes", he started walking away with it.

NL: So what happened next? Did things erupt into a riot?

BMD: Hardly, although that's what the cops wanted to believe and what the media reported. A group of us demanded the flag back, tried to bring attention to what was going on to others at the rally and then the cops lost it. Hyra rammed his bike into Ryan's leg, Ryan in turn called him a name and then Hyra grabbed him to either beat him up or arrest him. I wasn't really sure. A bunch of people grabbed onto Ryan to de-arrest him. One young woman was pinned against a tree by the cops and cried out in pain (apparently an EMT treated her after our arrests) so I instantly let go. And right when that happened, I was tackled to the ground by a linebacker-sized cop. I was tossed into a squad car and by the end of the day the three of us found ourselves in King County Jail.

NL: Did Hyra or the other cops try to interrogate you or question you in jail?

BMD: Hyra did. Jake and I were in a cell together. Ryan was elsewhere. Hyra came in and started to ask us questions. I remained completely silent, but Jake tried to reason, tried to find some logic or common ground with him. It's hard to find that with cops, and it was especially hard to do that with Hyra. He asked us what anarchist groups and organizations we were in, said that our friend Ryan had "already admitted to being an anarchist" and we should fess up and do the same. It was pretty obvious why we were in there. All the questions he asked were political in nature. I remember scoffing at him when he said it was completely legal for the police to confiscate anarchist flags at demonstrations and that the owners could come to the police, give them all their information, get ID'd and get their flags back at the end of the day. Right when I made that noise, he looked at me and said, "You put your hands on my back!" I shrugged at that. I had no idea what he was talking about.

NL: Tell us what you know about Seattle Police Officer Matt Hyra, the officer who was instrumental in, well in many ways, creating the Flag 3.

BMD: From what I learned, he was in the academy, in training during WTO back in '99. I don't know if he was on the streets then, but I'm guessing that all the lies the police and media fed about anarchists, that that was his first introduction to anarchists. He's gotten in trouble in the past a number of times. I found a Sanyo phone testimonial online where he was bragging about all the times he ended up in ERs for getting into drunken brawls or fights – one time he almost drowned on a drunken fishing trip. He was also sued in the past by Oriyon Abraha. This was a racial profiling and pretty severe police brutality case where Hyra knocked Abraha unconscious, and knocked some of his teeth out. Hyra also totalled three Seattle police cruisers in the past, thus making him three times more effective in causing financial damage to the police than what happened the night of the Dead Prez concert in Olympia in 2008 – but they kept him on the force. They just demoted him from car cop to bike cop. The guy is pretty much a tool. I mean, he said the day I was arrested was the "scariest day" of his life.

NL: Going back to the criminal case. What was the outcome of it and how was that experience overall?

BMD: Jake and Ryan were tried separately. As I mentioned earlier they both had misdemeanors and I had a felony charge. I went to court with them the day their charges were dropped. The judge was so upset with the prosecutor and with Hyra and with the entire ordeal that she said that it was completely within the legal rights for Ryan and Jake to resist arrest and to obstruct the police officers because the arrests were unconstitutional and illegal. I thought that was pretty amazing – a judge encouraging people to refuse the orders of the police. My case lasted much longer and I think three or four different prosecutors were assigned to my case. The stories of the police changed so much that their final story was that I jumped on Hyra's back, strangled him, punched him and attempted to un-holster his gun to shoot him. I went to so many buildings in downtown Seattle – cop shops, lawyer offices, and different court houses - I really got tired of it. The day my charges were dropped just so happened to be the day I overslept and arrived in court late. For whatever reason, when I show up late to court things turn out well for me (although I wouldn't encourage people to show up to court late). I remember walking by Safeco Field on my way to court and I walked by a newspaper box. The headline was something like "Norm Maleng – Seattle's Chief Prosecutor Dies" and my first thought was, damn, my charges are going to get dropped today. I was right.

The judge was so upset with the prosecutor and with Hyra and with the entire ordeal that she said it was completely within the legal rights for Ryan and Jake to resist arrest and to obstruct the police officers because the arrests were unconstitutional and illegal.

NW: I understand though that your troubles didn't end there. Wasn't there something that stuck on your record?

BMD: There was. There was an "officer safety alert" on my name, meaning that whenever I got pulled over in a car, or my name was checked or my ID was ran that something would flash on their screen detailing my arrest, saying that, basically, I tried to kill a cop in Seattle and was in a riot. Last year when I was working in a lumber mill in Shelton I got pulled over by the police five times in one month for absolutely nothing. And that alert would always come up. It came up at Evergreen with an altercation with a cop over racial profiling of Indian students and it's come up at the border. Every time I tried to go to Canada since this arrest I get detained at the border, interrogated, once deported and once reluctantly allowed entry. One of the Canadian Immigration officers said I have an FBI number – from what, I don't know. But it's probably from being involved with Port Militarization Resistance, the Flag 3 case, helping with the outing of John Towery the military spy and perhaps other things. I was also denied jobs – most recently with the US Census Bureau. I was also denied apartments because this kept on coming up in background checks even after it was tossed out and the case was closed. The judge and the prosecutors repeatedly demanded that the Seattle Police and WA State Police clear this from my record and every time they refused.

NL: What would your advice be to other anarchists, and other activists for that matter, who want to sue the police or the government?

BMD: If you have the patience and you think it will go well, you should do it. You really need the patience though. Emotionally, the whole thing was draining. I mentioned the humiliating nature of jail earlier. They carry this humiliation through all the way to the end – through the courts, even through lawsuits. It's just part of the society we live in: humiliation for being poor, or part of some oppressed group, for not fitting neatly into the dominant paradigm we have. That's something we as anarchists need to destroy, not just within ourselves but systematically. Court is very frustrating and I've spent more than enough hours sitting in court rooms as an observer, supporter or defendant that it has reaffirmed my beliefs that this whole system has to be completely scrapped for something new. Mumia Abu Jamal states that "the law is what the judge says it is" and he's absolutely right. So much power rests in the hands of one person.

The Peoples' Movement Assembly itinerary

Saturday, May 8
Olympia Community Center
222 Columbia St NW

8:00 AM - Doors open
9:00-9:30 AM - Coffee and pastries
9:30-10:45 AM - Opening Panel on themes of the day

1. Climate Change and Disaster Policies
2. Poverty in our local area
3. Sustainability issues
4. Preparing for the Social Forum in Detroit in June

11:00 AM-12:15 PM - First set of workshops

1. Health Care, Immediate needs and long term strategies
2. Economic Sustainability and Housing
3. Bike workshop
4. Know Your Legal Rights

11 AM-4 PM - Oly Really Really Free Market
12:15-1:15 PM - Lunch
1:15-2:30 PM - Second set of workshops

1. Veteran's rights and support
2. Feminism and the Movement
3. Government issues and the State Budget
4. Making Media Locally

2:45-3:50 PM - Third set of workshops

1. Latin American policies
2. Food Sustainability
3. BDS, (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions), Gaza Mural project plans
4. Participatory Budgets

4-4:30 PM - Final wrap up gathering
4:30-5:00 PM - Clean up and leave
Evening - Gaza Mural Project

VICS PIZZERIA
360.943.8044
233 Division St NW

TRADITIONS
CAFE & WORLD FOLK ART
WWW.TRADITIONSFAIRTRADE.COM
FAIR TRADE FEDERATION
300 5th Avenue SW
Olympia 98501
360-705-2819
Store Hours
M-F: 9-6 Sat: 10-6 Sun: 12-5

Coffee Strong welcomes Travis Bishop

Coffee Strong press release

Travis Bishop walked into Coffee Strong the morning of Thursday, March 25. He was released from the Fort Lewis brig after serving a seven and a half month sentence, for conscientious objection to service in Afghanistan. He seemed dazed by smiling faces in greeting, and then offered a big hug.

Many people helped with his early release: Gerry Condon and VFP 92, Jeff Paterson and Sarah Lazare at Courage to Resist, the great reporting skills of Dahr Jamail; Seth Manzel, James Branum, LeGrand Jones, Coffee Strong crew, and Amnesty International Puget Sound; 538 letter writers who were persistent! It felt like a community cared, and soldiers gathered to extend their appreciation. Good food and guitar strumming marked the occasion.

"Travis is an inspiration to all who want to actively oppose the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I am very proud to have met him and am glad he is part of the Coffee Strong community," said one of the soldiers.

Sergeant Bishop refused to serve in Afghanistan, based on his Baptist upbringing, and current convictions that Jesus practiced a strict pacifism. His convictions earned him the title of Prisoner of Conscience from Amnesty International. And he wished he had known sooner that he could have filed conscientious objection paperwork. (Travis thought this was an anachronism from the Vietnam War era).

We talked about how difficult it was to get letters delivered, once he had people listed on his "acceptance list." He said even his mother's letters were returned.

The most critical part of his journey remains. Attorney James Branum wrote last Fall about his dedication to pursuing what he terms "Bishop's Rights"—the right for all young soldiers to be apprised of their conscientious objection rights, without punishments (that include loss of rank, loss of benefits and dishonorable discharge, not to mention isolation, jail sentences, and possibly abusive treatment).

While Travis is recovering from his experience and planning what he will do next, Branum assures us the Bishop's Rights effort continues, heading to Congress for approval.

Because Bishop literally did not know he could file conscientious objection paperwork, he was initially denied rights by both the Fort Hood command and the Pentagon.

Bishop could see that the last-minute nature of his filing made it difficult to lend credence to it in the eyes of the military. However, he says most of the military knows nothing about this option.

For this reason, James Branum will continue the clemency appeal he filed, which addresses Bishop's unit not considering his conscientious objection filing, and the concerns articulated by others who witnessed the court-martial. Concerns were also filed regarding treatment of Bishop and other prisoners during his Fort Lewis incarceration.

Travis will pick up his country western career, and is considering returning to school. He will continue to support other soldiers who, like him, are conscientious objectors.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

TC PRO-NET
Thurston County Progressive Network

6TH ANNUAL
PROGRESSIVE TOWN HALL PICNIC

SUNDAY
JULY 11TH
3:30-8:00 P.M.

Please bring a potluck dish and RSVP to: sherri@tcpronet.org

Location: 3516 Pifer Rd. SE Olympia 98501, 352-8225

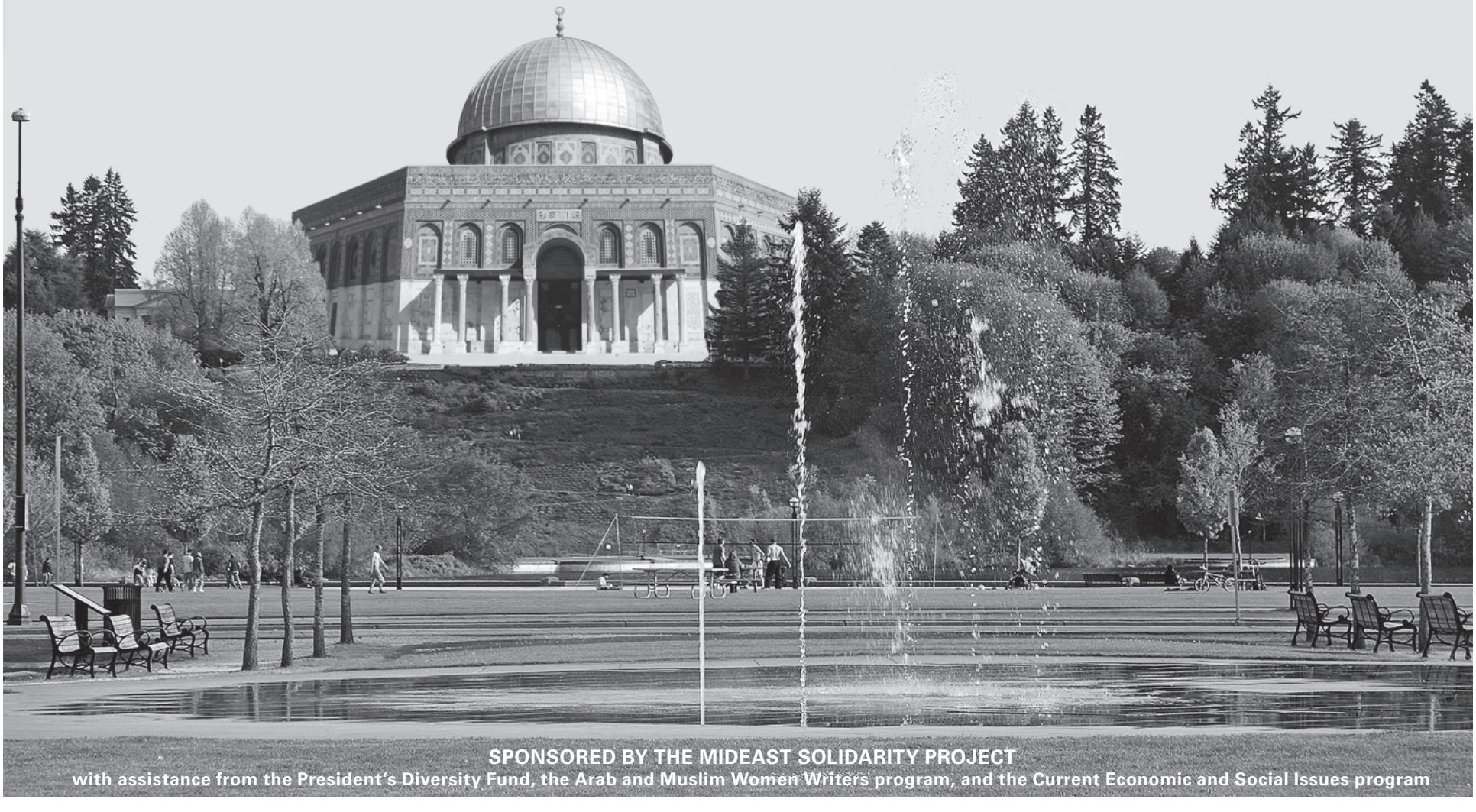
SEVENTH ANNUAL MIDEAST FILM FESTIVAL

The Evergreen State College
May 5–14, 2010

Defamation / Life After the Fall / Ajami / Afghan Stories / The Queen and I / 1 Hour 99 Years / Inside Out / This Palestinian Life / I Am Gaza / Seeds of Peace

Plus guest speakers Mohja Kahf, Dr. Negar Mottahedeh, Dr. Therese Saliba, Dr. Zoltan Grossman, Arsham Parsi, and a panel of war resisters—speaking on occupation and resistance in Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan; LGBTQ identity & struggle; anti-Arab racism; Iranian cinema after the 1979 revolution; deconstructing stereotypes of Muslim women; anti-Semitism vs. anti-Zionism; and more.

All events free. Program guide available at the S&A offices and throughout campus. Also available at www.mspfilmfestival.org



SPONSORED BY THE MIDEAST SOLIDARITY PROJECT
with assistance from the President's Diversity Fund, the Arab and Muslim Women Writers program, and the Current Economic and Social Issues program

Land crisis and repression in Aguán, Honduras

by Annie Bird, Rights Action

On Apr. 10, a minimum of 3,000 military troops and police were mobilized into the area of the Bajo Aguán on the north coast of Honduras, especially the town of Tocoa. Press reports claimed the US Drug Enforcement Agency is participating in the operation.

This massive mobilization occurred just three days before the Apr. 13 negotiations that could determine the fate of 20,000 hectares (almost 50,000 acres) of land whose ownership is contested between 3,500 poor farming families organized in the Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán (MUCA) and three powerful businessmen. It is feared that if the MUCA farmers do not accept the businessmens' proposal, represented in negotiations by Honduran President Porfirio Lobo, a proposal that remained firm in the three prior meetings, forced evictions of 28 communities and hundreds of arrests may occur.

Evictions in the area have a history of extreme violence, resulting in extrajudicial executions and even massacres.

In March, as the negotiations were getting off the ground, extensive media coverage was given to police and military sources that claimed MUCA farmers were supported by Cubans, Venezuelans, and the FARC (Colombian rebel group) and that they were associated with terrorism and drug trafficking. Human rights organizations closely following the situation found these charges not only to be baseless but to have the intention of criminalizing the farmers. These reports came following a generalized silence in the press regarding the October report of the UN Special Raporteur on Mercenaries that warned Honduran landowners had hired 40 members of the Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), classified as a terrorist organization by the US government. This UN report also documented that a force of 120 paramilitary mercenaries was assembled from various nations to support the coup.

Over the past two months, widespread reports in the region describe the training of paramilitary forces in military bases and police stations. There is also a campaign of military and paramilitary violence against MUCA members since December that resulted in reports of between four and twelve assassinations.

The ongoing presence of international human rights observers is urgently needed to further document the ongoing violence.

Paramilitary forces have a long history of close association with area landholders. Approximately ten years ago, the farmers that belong to the MUCA were forced off their lands by acts of paramilitary violence and fraudulent land registry processes; ever since they have been attempting to reclaim their land rights by filing complaints within the Honduran judicial system.

During the administration of deposed president Manuel Zelaya, the legal complaints lodged were beginning to be addressed, and on Jun. 12, agreements were signed to initiate investigation into the legitimacy of the land titles held by the three businessmen. Following the Jun. 28 coup, completion of the agreements came to an abrupt halt. As a result, on Dec. 9, farmers began resettling lands from which they had been dispossessed.

It is feared that if the MUCA farmers do not accept the businessmens' proposal, forced evictions of 28 communities and hundreds of arrests may occur.

Since Dec. 2009, dozens of eviction orders and hundreds of arrest warrants have been issued against MUCA members without the necessary investigations or civil suits to establish land rights as required by Honduran law.

"Negotiations" under threat

The April 13 meeting is the fourth negotiation table between regime leader Pepe Lobo and the MUCA farmers. The proposal of the government is to sell 6,000 of the 20,000 contested hectares of land to the farmers, but the farmers would be obligated to farm half of that land with African palm and sell its fruits to the processing plants owned by the three businessmen, denying them access to better marketing options. Farmers estimate that were both hectares planted with African Palm and produced good harvests, they would expect to earn approximately $150 per month after land payments.

The eviction orders and arrest warrants have been in place since the "negotiations" were established in January, and new arrest warrants are constantly being issued. In February, Lobo ordered that while "negotiations" occur the evictions and arrests could not be carried out. In March, a campaign of defamation against the farmers was launched in Honduran press.

The media's criminalization campaign has falsely implicated the farmers in acts of violence, generating the specter of an armed movement with ties to Venezuela at a time when lobbyists in Washington are pushing the US government to put Venezuela on the list of nations that support terrorism.

Though journalists cite police sources to support the claim of aid by Venezuelans, Cubans and Nicaraguans and that the farmers are involved in drug trafficking and the FARC, no evidence has been supplied to substantiate these accusations.

The troop and police mobilization before tomorrow's negotiation session has generated fear among Honduran human rights organizations that if the farmers refuse to accept the government's proposal, the president will allow troops to violently evict and arrest farmers.

It is also feared that the media's criminalization campaign has laid the groundwork for operations intended to falsely implicate the farmers in acts of violence, generating the specter of an armed movement with ties to Venezuela in opposition to the coup government at a time when lobbyists in Washington are pushing the US government to put Venezuela on the list of nations that support terrorism. However, the findings of the UN Special Raporteur on Mercenaries, on the Honduran landowners' connections to the terrorist AUC, went largely unreported in Honduran press.

Some observers attribute the bias in the Honduran press to the practice of paying journalists and news outlets to run stories. It is also important to note the owner of two principal Honduran newspapers, Jorge Canahuati, along with a Honduran business association, paid $210,000 plus costs from July to September 2009 to Washington DC lobbyists who defended the coup.

Farmers targeted with violence

The October report of AUC and other transnational paramilitary/mercenary presence in Honduras is again timely as widespread reports are surfacing of paramilitary presence and training in the Bajo Aguán in the months leading up to this military occupation.

During March and April, various credible sources report sightings of Billy Joya Amendola in Tocoa, operating out of the Fourth Battalion Infantry based in the city of La Ceiba, Atlántida. Joya is well known in Honduras as a member of the 316 Batallion, a paramilitary force then linked to the Honduran and US militaries, that was implicated in kidnappings, torture and extrajudicial executions in the 1980s. He also owns private security companies that operate in Honduras.

Reports claim that Joya is training paramilitary forces based out of the Fourth Battalion Infantry and the Fifteenth Infantry Battalion based in the town of Rio Claro, Trujillo, Colón. The Fifteenth Battalion has been consistently implicated in providing direct support to the businessmen implicated in a land conflict with 28 communities in the Aguán. The commander of the military battalion is reported to hire reservists and paramilitaries, and supervise the private security forces on the African Palm plantations. Verification of these reports is urgently needed.

On Mar. 26, Honduran human rights organization CODEH (Comité para la Defensa de Derechos Humanos de Honduras) received a phone call from a woman claiming to be the wife of one of 30 police officers who had been locked up for two weeks in the premises of the Regional Police Command of Tocoa, Colón. Recruited from regions across the country, the group was being "trained to commit acts that are against the law" and were subjected to physical duress, such as hunger, procedures that were widely documented as elements of preparation for material perpetrators of grave human rights violations.

Following CODEH's denouncement on national television of the situation, the Human Rights procurator from the city of Tocoa, Colón, attempted to visit the named police station in Tocoa but was denied entry.

Since January, elements of the Tocoa Police, the Fifteenth Army Battalion, private security forces and unidentified armed men were implicated in illegal detentions, extrajudicial executions, and shooting resulting in grave injuries. Four extrajudicial executions of MUCA members and supporters were well-documented, but reports indicate that there may be as many as twelve. Further documentation of this violence is urgently needed.

It is worth noting that police and military forces in this region have a long history of paramilitary activities in collaboration with banana companies that have historically maintained a strong presence in the area. Lawsuits being advanced against banana companies in Colombia document long standing relationships between Colombian AUC paramilitaries and banana companies. The Washington lobbyist paid by Jorge Canahuati to defend the coup also represents Chiquita.

Businessmen usurp cooperatives

In 1992, changes to Honduras' agrarian reform legislation made it possible for land acquired through the reform program to be resold. This allowed politically powerful businessmen Miguel Facusse, Rene Morales and Reinaldo Canales, beginning in 1998, to acquire control of lands that had pertained to 28 African palm oil-producing cooperatives of the Aguán region.

These land sales by the cooperatives were apparently illegal. Since the land was collectively held in cooperatives, in order to sell the land the majority of the assembly had to vote to sell. In many cases, the majority of the co-op membership did not want to sell, so paramilitary assassins killed those who opposed the sale, intimidating the rest of the members into selling against their will. When cooperatives did not sell, even faced with the threat of assassination, some cooperative members or leaders received bribes to falsify acts by the assembly agreeing to sell.

Between 1997 and 1999, the African palm oil businessmen acquired control of 20,000 hectares of land that belonged to 28 cooperatives. It is worth noting these same methods were used in Guatemala by drug traffickers in Izabal, Alta Verapaz and the Peten from approximately the late 1990s until today, and a widespread practice in Colombia.

Honduras land rights violations

Agrarian legislation in Honduras stipulates that no person can hold lands in excess of a stipulated extension without fulfilling a series of requirements. MUCA legal advisors claim that though the lands the businessmen obtained surpassed these extensions, and they did not meet those legal requirements, they were nonetheless granted permission to retain title of excess lands in their names in a concession that expired in 2005. Under the presidency of Manuel Zelaya, that concession was not renewed.

In 2001, the now landless families from the cooperatives, destroyed in this process, formed the MUCA, through which they continued to document the illegalities in the manner in which the Aguán cooperatives had been forced to sell.

In 2004, the MUCA presented the first of many lawsuits. Unfortunately, as is the standard practice in Honduran justice administration, the suits simply have not been reviewed despite legally established time limits for judicial review. This kind of judicial inaction was denounced as corruption in hunger strikes by Honduran justice operators in 2008.

Honduran activist Miriam Miranda, holding up a copy of the newspaper *La Prensa*. Translated, the headline reads "Armed guerrillas in the Aguán Valley," part of the newspaper's attempt to discredit the campesinos. Photo by Kerry Griffis.

▸ **CONTINUED** on the next page

This forced the farmers, beginning in 2006, to undertake a series of peaceful protests, and to begin resettling lands. These actions culminated in a negotiation process, which advanced to the point of signing an important agreement with then president Manuel Zelaya on Jun. 12.

The agreement obligated the businessmen to demonstrate documentation to support their land rights, and established the investigation of the allegations of coercion and fraud in the land sales. If illegalities were discovered in the sales process, the sales would be deemed null and void, and title returned to the cooperatives. As a demonstration of good faith, the families temporarily left the farms while investigations took place.

Following the Jun. 28 military coup in Honduras, the steps agreed upon in the Jun. 12 accords were not implemented.

Thus, on Dec. 9, during the de facto regime headed by Roberto Micheletti, the MUCA began resettling the farms that they were forced to abandon a decade before.

Annie Bird is co-director of Rights Action, a US and Canada based not-for-profit organization that supports community development and environmental and human rights defense work in Honduras (as well as Guatemala, and elsewhere). For updates, visit rightsaction.org or contact Annie at annie@rightsaction.org or 202-680-3002. To make tax deductible donations to support community development and environmental and human rights defense organizations in Honduras – including the MUCA, make checks payable to "Rights Action" and mail to Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887.

Aguán Update

Thanks to all of you who called the U.S. State Department regarding the emergency in Aguán - to those who got through and to those who tried! We know that due to the deluge of calls, the State Department stopped answering, and eventually disconnected the number we provided. Sorry to those of you who were not able to get through - but know that the pressure of our combined efforts got our message delivered.

We have received reports that, after a 12 hour negotiation session, the Unified Peasant Movement of the Aguán (MUCA) has signed a preliminary agreement with the Government of Honduras regarding the conflict in the region. The agreement is scheduled to be ratified on Saturday in Tocoa, Colón after the peasant population has had an opportunity to review the terms.

During the negotiation session, President Lobo committed to withdrawal of the police and military presence from the zone. This is a positive development; however, the situation remains tense. Hours after the agreement was signed, the Regional Director of the National Agrarian Institute (INA) was detained by police at a military checkpoint in the zone.

One day before the settlement was reached, Honduran human rights organization, COFADEH (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras), issued an urgent letter to the United Nations High Commissioner outlining events in the region and recommending actions.

We will continue to monitor events closely and will call on you again if your action is needed. Thanks to your strong response to this alert!

Jenny Atlee,
Quixote Center

Mobilization for Honduras

Viva la Resistencia Popular! Fuera Golpistas! Todos a la Consulta Popular!

Camaradas, in preparation for the first anniversary of the Honduran coup, for the upcoming consulta popular, and in light of the increasing state violence directed towards organizers and communities in resistance, several organizations are coordinating accompaniment delegations in June. For more info and to coordinate fundraising and outreach, email hola@pcasc.net and latinamericansolidarity@gmail.com.

Join a Quixote Center Delegation to Honduras: June 24 - July 1

The people of Honduras request our accompaniment as they mark the first anniversary of the coup d'état and emergence of the Honduran Resistance Movement. After one year of relentless repression, the resistance movement is strong, resilient and advancing the dream of social change.

Tragically, repression remains strong as well. As a delegation of Honduran lawyers testified about human rights abuses before the Interamerican Human Rights Commission of the OAS in Washington DC, a group of hooded men entered a middle school in Tegucigalpa, assassinating a teacher, who was riddled with bullets at close range in front of his colleagues and students.

On June 28, the people of Honduras will show their determination to continue resisting the coup by holding a national consultation - where people will cast their vote on the question of holding "National Inclusive and Popular Constitutional Assembly."

The Quixote Center Accompaniment Delegation will serve as observers to this process, reporting on what we find and providing alternative voices to the Honduran and US media.

Estimated Cost: The cost of the trip will include RT airfare to Honduras, plus $700 for in country expenses (food, lodging, transport, program set up, translation etc)

Participants: Those interested in participating should have some experience traveling in a developing country or zone of conflict and ability to manage stress in a fluid situation. Spanish is helpful but not essential. Participants are encouraged to engage in advocacy work following the trip. For more info and to apply, contact Jenny Atlee at jennya@quixote.org

La Voz de los de Abajo Delegation - June 26 - July 4

In response to the call from the Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular (FNRP) and the organizations fighting to re-found Honduras a year after the coup d'etat, La Voz de los de Abajo is organizing a delegation to Honduras from June 26 - July 4. The delegation will accompany the resistance in Tegucigalpa on the anniversary of the coup, June 28, and then travel outside the capitol to visit Radio Progreso and organizations in El Progreso and to Aguan to accompany the campesino movements under attack in the north. We will meet with resistance leaders, organizations and communities, to collect information, testimonies about human rights abuses, and to learn about the consulta popular and the movement to re-found the country. Delegation participants should have a commitment to bring solidarity with Honduras back to their communities and organizations.

There is room for 12 participants in the delegation. Participants are responsible for their own airfare in and out of Tegucigalpa; we will need to coordinate arrivals and departures. The delegation fee is $900. This covers the cost of all in-country transportation, at least two meals a day, and lodging. For more info, contact: Victoria Cervantes (312) 259-5042; La Voz de los de Abajo myspace.com/lavozchicago98 facebook: LaVoz Delosde Abajo lavozchicago.blogspot.com, hondurasresists.blogspot.com .

Rights Action Human Rights Delegation, June 26-July 4

Since the June 28 oligarchic-military coup against the government of President Zelaya, Rights Action, along with other North American activist and solidarity groups, are working hard to support the extraordinary anti-coup, pro-democracy movement.

Now that the illegal November 29 "elections" are over, now that the January 27, "transfer of power" to the new regime of Pepe Lobo is over, this delegation will overlap with the first anniversary of the oligarchic-military coup that ousted the democratic government of President Zelaya.

Not just an educational delegation, this will be a human rights accompaniment and observation delegation.

Participants will learn about the background context that led to the coup, about the courage and spirit of Honduras' peaceful pro-democracy movement, about the repression being used by the oligarchic-military regime, about the long-term goals of the people's movement to establish a National Constituent Assembly and to re-found the Honduran State and society.

If you are considering joining this delegation, we urge you to read through our series of Honduras Coup Alerts, found at rightsaction.org.

Participation: There are no specific requirements for participation. What we ask of interested people is that you accept that this is not some sort of "impartial," "objective" investigation. Rights Action is clearly critical of the illegal coup of June 2009, effectively backed and legitimized by the governments of the US and Canada, and of the repression and policies of the post-coup regimes since then.

Cost: US $750, that includes 8 nights lodging and 2 meals/day, over 7 days; delegation set-up, translation, in-country guiding and planning, etc; honorariums for some invited speakers. Delegates are responsible for their travel to and from Honduras.

RISK: We will have discussions with interested persons about the possible risks involved with this delegation, before people decide to join or not. Having said this, a good number of international human rights delegations have visited Honduras since the June 28 coup.

For more info, contact Annie Bird at annie@rightsaction.org or 202-680-3002

Witness for Peace Honduras: Continuing the Resistance

August 10- August 18

Total Cost: $575 plus airfare to Honduras, due by July 10

Deposit: $150, due by June 30.

On June 28, a military coup, led by graduates of the School of the Americas ousted the democratically elected leader of Honduras. As hundreds of thousands of Hondurans took to the streets to protest, the coup regime began a systematic campaign of intimidation and violence to silence their voices.

In response to accusations of widespread human rights abuses on the part of the de facto Honduran government, Witness for Peace quickly responded by sending staff members and a delegation of U.S. citizens to bear witness to the situation. Since the coup regime has taken over the government this past January, we have received testimony of massive human rights violations committed by police and military forces. Opposition voices, members of Honduran social movements, and human rights workers are struggling to restore democracy while being targeted for illegal detention, harassment, and assassination.

Join this Witness for Peace delegation as we return to Honduras to stand in solidarity with the people at a critical stage in their struggle for democracy. Please join the struggle--come to Honduras, gather first-hand reports, and return to the U.S. with testimony that will help influence U.S. policy!

For more info, contact Megan Hise at 503-515-5456.

Works In Progress Birthday Bake Sales

Come help us kick off WIP's 21st year by gobbling up baked goods and pizza at our Bake Sales at OFS, Thurs. & Fri. May 6th & 7th during Olympia Film Society's, showing of "The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers." Support local, independent media, and support local, independent theater, by watching this telling documentary about how media and individuals influence our country, the world, and history. We need independent media if we are ever to be a democracy, and WIP needs your support going into its **third decade** of publishing grassroots progressive voices of our community. Thank you!

TWO NIGHTS
Thurs. May 6 - Fri. May 7

STYLING · CUTS · COLOR · PERMS
DEEP CONDITIONING · MANICURES · PEDICURES · MASSAGE · ASTROLOGY · TAROT
FREE CONSULTATIONS · FREE BANG TRIMS
"We'll trim it, rub it, or read it"
JAMIE LEE & COMPANY
309 E. 4TH AVE.
OLYMPIA, WA 98501
360-786-6027
JAMIELEEANDCOMPANY.COM
KAOS patron business.
BOTANICAL HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

U.S. TAXES
AT WORK:
$6 Billion a Month For War
You have a choice.
Contact the
National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee
PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215
1.800.269.7464 · www.nwtrcc.org

Tax Day: Tea parties, espresso snobs, freedom and equality

by David Rovics

David Rovics is a musician who sings songs of social significance.
www.davidrovics.com

I can't stand talk radio of any political persuasion, it's all too repetitive and emotional. But I like to keep tabs on the media landscape out there, and in terms of who's talking on the radio in much of the USA here are your choices, in order of prevalence: football, Jesus, Rush Limbaugh and, late at night when folks are apparently good and ready for it, shows about the government hiding the existence of aliens from outer space who are living in Nevada. If you find the "public" radio station and the classical music playing all day hasn't put you to sleep yet, for an hour or so in the evening you can listen to chirpy graduates of Ivy League schools with upper-class New England accents review the latest in French cinema or the newest innovations in poodle-grooming techniques. On TV it's even worse. Through this static there are a lot of people who are out of work and living in an overcrowded, dilapidated shack somewhere in Michigan or Texas who are desperately trying to make sense of the world around them.

The one redeeming thing about talk radio is that they actually allow people to call in now and then and the conversation isn't entirely one-way. It's clear who has the mike and who's steering things, but I'm always impressed at how often the disconnect comes up. That is, the caller is usually a good "ditto head" as long as we're lambasting hippies or the cultural elite or drug addicts or poor people attempting to take advantage of the remnants of our welfare system. But as soon as a caller says something negative about the corporations, corporate welfare, the corporations who took their business to Mexico and China and left unemployment and poverty in their wake, Rush quickly corrects their impression that the rich are in any way to blame for this situation – no, the unions are to blame for demanding a living wage, in case you didn't know.

For Rush, the pundits on Fox, and so on, it's all about freedom – freedom from the tyranny of the Democratic Party, who, according to their narrative, are intent on spending all of your tax money on helping people inside the US and around the world who are too lazy to help themselves, leaving you, the hard-working white American man, ignored and exploited. For Rush and company, above all, freedom is about freedom from government (when Democrats are involved) and the great importance of individual liberties – freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to home school, the right to bear arms and be left alone. The Democrats want to make your children go to school and turn them into atheists, raise your taxes in order to waste more of your money, and take away your guns.

These are people who are often working two shit jobs to make ends meet whereas a generation ago one would have done just fine. They very legitimately feel disenfranchised and they're being told by the only voices on the airwaves that seem to resonate with an appropriate level of anger that their problems were caused by the Democrats and Democratic rule will make everything still worse. If you actually talk to these people, it often doesn't take long to realize that many of them feel almost as alienated by the Republicans as they do by the Democrats. You realize that if there were appropriately pissed off voices of the radical left broadcasting across the airwaves, reaching into the trucks on the highways and the trailers in the prairies, as long as these were the sorts of radical left voices that support individual liberty and aren't trying to take everybody's guns away, a good anti-corporate message would resonate perhaps more now than ever.

In fact, much of this stirring among the self-proclaimed "patriot" groups predates Obama. Many among this milieu were outraged by the bank bailout that happened under Bush's watch, just as most of the rest of society was. But it was only after the election of Obama that the Republican media mouthpieces (Fox, etc.) began blaming the new government for the imploding economy, as if the years of corrupt Republican rule never happened, as if the deregulation of the banking industry and the bank bailout was not supported by the Republicans as well as the Democrats.

Rush and Fox and company do their best to keep their listeners in a permanent state of confusion about where we've been, where we're at now and what the solution is – they do their best to make it look like the problem is anything but monopoly capitalism, rule of the rich, control of the government by the Fortune 500. But while many of their listeners may be skeptical about letting the corporate elite off the hook in terms of why so many hard-working, rugged individualists are in a state of deprivation despite their formidable efforts, it's not hard for them to agree with the pundits and "patriot" group leaders on one thing – that the Democratic Party is a hopelessly corrupt institution led by people who constantly say one thing and do another.

Let's not get into this stiff "us and them" dichotomy. These are people with very legitimate complaints, and dismissing them as racists or whatever other label people on the left want to put on them is simplistic.

Now, most people, especially people who define themselves as progressive, would say exactly the same thing about the Republicans – and of course they'd be right. Both parties' leadership claim they're on the side of Main Street, not Wall Street – ordinary people, not the elite. The truth is quite evident to people who actually study the facts, rather than listening to the propagandists of either party: both of our ruling parties are thoroughly corrupted institutions serving the interests of the corporate elite, at the expense of the ordinary people of the US and ordinary people around the world.

The leadership of neither party questions our massive military expenditures. Both parties claim we're trying to bring democracy to other people, to better the lives of women and the oppressed in the Muslim world, when what the leadership of both parties know full well is that we're fighting wars for oil. For decades the Democrats, in and out of power but always part of the power structure, claim they stand for equality, for an egalitarian society. They always claim their social programs are going to house the poor, improve the schools, give people jobs – and, fundamentally, again and again, year after year, decade after decade, they lie. The schools continue to deteriorate, the jobs are harder to find and pay less, the opportunities for most people decrease, the society becomes increasingly divided, whether Democrats control the Congress and the White House or not.

The truth is in our country the rich and the big corporations are hardly taxed, while the working class and the small businesses bear the lion's share of the tax burden, and this is the program of both the RNC and the DNC. In our country neither party really supports social programs that could seriously lift our people up because both parties are too busy spending much of our money on nuclear bombs, corporate kickbacks and armies of private mercenaries. Both parties rule by a system of legalized bribery, called lobbying, that would land politicians in other ostensibly democratic countries in jail.

And if these angry listeners of Rush Limbaugh go looking for alternative versions of reality, let's hope they don't discover Mother Jones magazine, because they'll just be pushed right back into Rush's arms. In this month's issue we have a fearful expose of the Oath Keepers, and the editors lamenting that people like Rush "are actively negating a fundamental principle of American politics: that the government, no matter how much you might disagree with its representatives, is of, by, and for the people." What a crock of shit. Mother Jones herself would be appalled at such drivel.

This is a government of, by, and for the corporate elite, which controls both parties. To regular people in the rest of the world this is fairly obvious. The "patriot" rank and file sense this but they've been actively misled by their supposed spokespeople for a long, long time, going way back before the invention of talk radio. But liberals whining that the "patriots" just need to play by the rules isn't helping at all. These people are angry for all kinds of good reasons – unemployment, poverty, and yes, most definitely taxation without representation – they are just confused about how things got this way, and this confusion is a state some very large corporations and their lackeys work very hard to maintain and benefit from.

I don't want to downplay the possibility of a serious fascist movement in this country. With forces like Rupert Murdoch and Dick Cheney at work, with a widespread perception that democracy has failed us, combined with growing hopelessness about the future prospects of "the American Dream," the prospects for a real fascist movement are alarming. But let's not get into this stiff "us and them" dichotomy when it comes to the "patriot movement." These are people with very legitimate complaints, and dismissing them as racists or whatever other label people on the left want to put on them is simplistic. They have certainly been fed a steady diet of pro-corporate and most definitely racist propaganda from the corporate media and from both major political parties for decades or longer. This doesn't excuse bigotry, but it certainly explains it.

Whether or not the "patriots" know it, neither corporate party is going to make things better for them, and under different circumstances, with accessible, local voices of real anti-elitist, anti-corporate, pro-human reason around them they might be a lot angrier and they might know what they're angry about. The grandparents of many of these disgruntled "patriots" were probably, in their youth in the 1930's throughout the midwest, taking back farms and homes by force which were foreclosed upon by banks, and joining massive unions of the unemployed. Rush is telling them the Democrats only care about "special interests," which is entirely true (it's just that the special interests in question aren't the same ones Rush says they are). For their part, the Democrats are responding to the bubbling rage of this growing underclass with calls that they should just play by the rules, while steadfastly refusing to make the kinds of changes that could really make a difference – doubling taxes on the rich, outlawing corporate lobbying, ending corporate welfare, slashing the military budget, bringing the troops home, and hiring millions of new teachers and windmill-builders, for example. The "patriots" are outraged, whether or not they really understand why, and you should be, too – it's about as true now as it ever was, though many Democratic voters have removed their old bumper stickers: if you're not outraged, you're not paying attention.

If the so-called progressives of this country can't snap out of their Obama-induced slumber, take to the streets and vocally break ranks with both corrupt parties that are driving this country into the ground – if the left can't offer a serious, grassroots, anti-elitist alternative to right-wing populism, but insists on maintaining the ridiculous illusion that we live in a democracy, then the future will indeed be bleak, and ugly, and filled with "patriots."

http://www.davidrovics.com

Cartridge Care Inc.

THE PRINTER EXPERTS since 1990

TONER - FILM - INK JETS
Remanufactured and new - Hundreds in stock

REPAIR - SERVICE - SALES for
Printers - Fax - Copiers - Plotters

Free Pick Up & Delivery

1314 Lebanon St. SE - Lacey 360-459-8845

The Olympia Free Herbal Clinic is open again!

The Clinic has a new office space in downtown Olympia.

Our open hours are:

Tuesdays	**3 to 7 pm**
Wednesdays	**5 to 7 pm**
Thursdays	**3 to 7 pm**

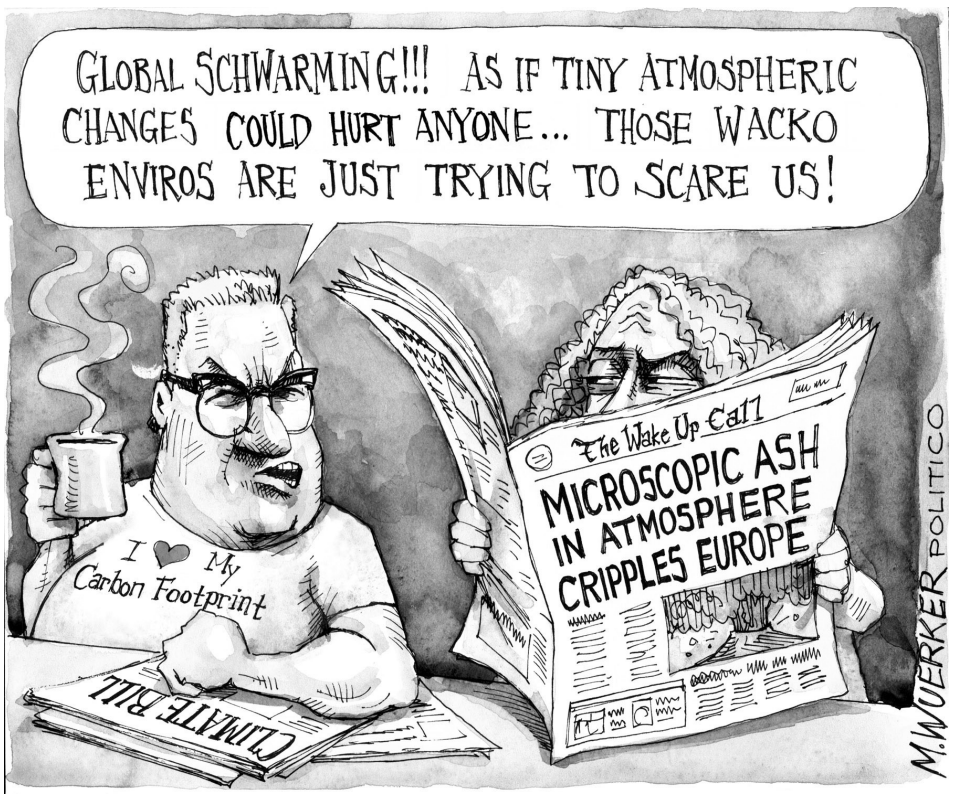
In the White Building on 4th Avenue (across from the Reef and above Last Word Books) in Room 212. The entrance is to the right of Last Word Books. Our office is up the stairs, down the hall, and to the right.

They are currently accepting applications for internships. Areas of focus include:

- Fundraising
- Donations and advertising
- Medicine
- Receptionist

Their wish list:

- Medicine-making supplies
- Clean, empty tincture bottles
- Organically cultivated or ethically wild-crafted herbs
- Books on herbal medicine, anatomy&physiology, herb/drug interactions, etc.


GLOBAL SCHWARMING!!! AS IF TINY ATMOSPHERIC CHANGES COULD HURT ANYONE... THOSE WACKO ENVIROS ARE JUST TRYING TO SCARE US!
The Wake Up Call
MICROSCOPIC ASH IN ATMOSPHERE CRIPPLES EUROPE
I ♥ My Carbon Footprint
CLIMATE BILL
M.WUERKER POLITICO

Empowering Ourselves for Profound Democracy

What do:

Dispute Resolution Center
Thurston County TV
Procession of the Species
TULIP Credit Union
and *Works In Progress*

have in common?

Tune in to "Empowering Ourselves for Profound Democracy" all this month on TCTV, Thursdays at 9:00 pm and Mondays at 1:30 pm. Or starting next month, check it out at www.olympiafellowshipofreconciliation.blip.tv

The Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has been working for peace, social and economic justice, and a nonviolent world since 1976. One of Olympia FOR's many activities is the TCTV interview program. Glen Anderson has been producing and hosting the show since 1987. Each one-hour program features several guests discussing a relevant topic in a friendly, supportive way.

Hats off to WIP for...

20 YEARS OF SERIOUS NEWS REPORTING

A rare quality these days

TC PRO-NET
Thurston County Progressive Network

▸ **MARIJUANA,** continued from page 1

marijuana activism.

Mike: *What are the connections, similarities, overlaps with the earlier medical marijuana initiative?*

Justin: Initiative 1068 certainly overlaps RCW 69.51A, but I would not characterize them as connected or similar. I-1068 was started by activists who are not satisfied with the result of the legislative process regarding medical marijuana since 1998. The approaches are different in that the legislative approach so far has been an effort to maintain and expand state control of medical marijuana and patients who use it. Some lawmakers support a state registry where the government would keep lists of patients on file for who knows what use. Medical marijuana activists have agitated against this from the beginning, and I-1068 was authored with this spirit of liberal freedom in mind. I-1068 wipes away the state controls that have caused cloudy laws with variable enforcement, while keeping good regulation.

Mike: *What exactly did the earlier medical marijuana initiative mean for Washington State Citizens?*

Justin: When the medical marijuana law RCW69.51A was passed in 1998 by the citizens of Washington state it meant that physicians and qualifying patients would now be allowed to discuss fully candidly the risks and benefits of medical marijuana in treating terminal and debilitating illnesses and that a qualifying patient who in the judgment of their physicians may benefit from the medical use of marijuana shall not be found guilty of a crime under state law for their possession and limited use of marijuana.

Mike: *How did the medical marijuana initiative change anything?*

Justin: The short answer is not enough... A while back I did some man-on-the-street Q & A's asking people two basic questions about medical marijuana:

1. Does the medical marijuana law prevent patients from being arrested?

2. Do medical marijuana patients have safe legal access to acquire medical marijuana?

Surprisingly a lot more people told me they thought medical marijuana patients were safe from arrest and had safe access via a dispensary to acquire medical marijuana then not, But unlike what most people I asked thought the medical marijuana law RCW69.51A does not prevent patients from being arrested or give them safe legal access to acquire medical marijuana. Instead it only allows them to raise an affirmative defense in court, so in reality we are still wasting valuable law enforcement resources and court time trying to arrest and prosecute the very same patients the law was trying to protect.

Mike: *Have other states voted on or passed similar initiatives? Have any similar initiatives passed?*

Justin: To this date 14 states have legalized medical marijuana and 13 have decriminalized* marijuana to some degree, but there has not been a successful legalization initiative passed by any state in the US. Although currently Oregon is in the process of trying to get a bill on the ballot and California is getting ready to vote on a bill that would legalize marijuana for adult recreational use in November.

*[Typically, decriminalization means no prison time or criminal record for first-time possession of a small amount for personal consumption. The conduct is treated like a minor traffic violation.]

Mike: *Thanks, Justin, for taking the time to explain about this initiative and the medical marijuana law in Washington State. Where should folks go for more information about Initiative I-1068?*

Justin: The place to start is www.sensiblewashington.org. Information is also available at the Olympia Patient Resource Center at 2417 Pacific Avenue, Suite B-23, Olympia WA 98501. You can reach us by phone at (360) 456-3517 or email us at oprcinfo@gmail.com.

News Bits

Compiled by Mike Coday

• The New York Times reports that JP Morgan Chase has posted first quarter profit of 3.3 billion dollars, a 57% increase over the first quarter profit of 2.1 billion dollars in 2009. Profits from investment trading are reported to have helped Chase offset losses tied to consumer credit losses in mortgages and credit cards.

• Representative Barney Frank (D, Mass.) has introduced legislation to legalize internet poker, mah-jongg and other betting games.

• War and rumors of war ended in one area of Afghanistan in April as the US withdrew troops from the Korengal Valley east of Kabul, Afghanistan in April, leaving this battleground in the hands and control of the valley to the residents of the area. Five years of firefights in the Korengal Valley resulted in the deaths of 40 US troops and countless Afghani deaths, but who's counting. President Barack Obama, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced no plans to visit the Korengal Valley to celebrate the end of hostilities in the Korengal.

• Journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal continues to reside and write from Death Row at SCI Greene, a Supermax prison in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death in 1981 for the shooting death of a Philadelphia policeman. The appeal process in that conviction continues to this day.

• The Obama Administration is reported to have mandated the rule-making process that will require hospitals that receive Medicare or Medicaid funding (most US hospitals) must extend hospital visitation rights to same sex partners.

• West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin III has proposed that mining activity stop production for one day so that mine safety issues can be evaluated after 29 mine workers died at the Upper Big Branch Mine near Charleston, WV in April. Massey Energy, owner of the Upper Big Branch Mine is reported to have agreed to the one day shut-down.

• The Daily Telegraph reports that a Croatian teenager from Knin woke from a 24-hour coma speaking fluent German and is now communicating with her parents through an interpreter.

• The Washington Post reports that the Securities Exchange Commission filed fraud charges against Goldman Sachs on April 16 charging that the giant investment bank sold investments that were designed to lose value. The SEC charges that Goldman Sachs did not reveal that the investments were designed by hedge fund company Paulson & Company for sale by Goldman Sachs at the same time that Paulson & Company were placing bets that the investments would lose value.

• Attorney Lynne Stewart is now in the sixth month of a 28-month sentence for practicing law in defense of a convicted terrorist. www.lynnestewart.org to sign a petition for Lynne's release. Works in Progress has invited Lynne or her friends to come to Olympia and speak with us as their schedules will allow.

Community ACUPUNCTURE Studio
Group Treatment Room
Comfortable Recliners
Sliding-Scale from $20-$40
2801 Pacific Ave SE, Olympia
Ph. (360) 943-6730
www.cas-olympia.com

CollateralMurder.org and the Future of War Reporting

by Joshua Neuhouser

It's like the setup of a very bad joke: a group of men walked down a street in Baghdad. Among them were two Reuters employees – a young photographer named Namir Noor-Elden and his middle-aged driver, Saeed Chmagh. They had caught the attention of a circling Apache helicopter, whose gunners had identified Noor-Elden's camera as a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and the men as enemy combatants. As Noor-Elden raised his camera, preparing to shoot, the American gunship fired 200 rounds into the crowd.

The noise disturbed Saleh Matasher Tomal, who lived nearby. He ventured outside and saw no fighting – just scattered dead bodies and a wounded journalist crawling along the sidewalk. He started up his van, loaded his kids Doaha and Sayad into the back, and tried to take Saeed Chmagh to the hospital.

"Come on, let us shoot!" one of the gunmen begged to his commanding officer over the radio. Permission was granted and the van was destroyed. "I think we whacked 'em all."

Ground forces quickly moved in and cordoned off the area. They found eleven dead Iraqi men and Saleh's children, wounded. "Oh well," lamented one soldier half-heartedly. "Well, it's their fault for bringing their kids into a battle."

All this is depicted in a video taken from the helicopter, which Reuters had been lobbying the Pentagon to release, without success, since this July 2007 incident. Last month, the online whistleblower resource WikiLeaks uploaded the video onto their new website CollateralMurder.org, along with radio transcripts and copies of the Army's classified Rules of Engagement.

The authenticity of the video has been vouched for by David Finkel, a Washington Post staff writer who had been embedded with the unit that secured the neighborhood after the airstrike. He gives an identical account of these events in his book *The Good Soldiers*. Yet Finkel was also the first to point out that the video only shows about 40 minutes from what had been a very long day for U.S. troops. Context is everything: this particular area of Baghdad *had* been the site of a battle that day, and even though the shooting began after a gunner mistook a camera for a weapon, David Finkel saw AK-47s scattered between the bodies with his own eyes. Another man lay sprawled across his RPG launcher that was as much not a camera as Noor-Elden's camera was not an RPG.

What had happened here? Was this simply a tragic mistake? The Army seemed to think so, and after its internal investigation, cleared all participants in the airstrike of any wrongdoing. It's hard to argue that the deaths of two journalists were justified, but it's also easy to make moral judgments on the conduct of soldiers when you're far from the battlefield. Military analysts often speak of the "fog of war" – in the middle of combat, it's impossible to have all the information needed to make rational decisions that will both ensure victory and minimize casualties. It's inevitable that when the fog clears, some giants will be revealed to be windmills by the light of day. Yet even according to the Army's 2007 Rules of Engagement, it is questionable whether any of this should have been permitted. The soldiers were not, at the time, under attack, nor were any of the men positively identified as members of designated terrorist organizations. They had mistakenly identified a camera as a rocket launcher, it is true – but a rocket launcher was later found among the dead, suggesting that maybe the soldiers were not far off the mark after all. Much of this remains ambiguous, perhaps attributable to the fog of war.

Yet if this is true, then why did the Army refuse to release the video as Reuters requested? Why did the Army confiscate Noor-Elden's camera? And why was the van fired upon – an act that seems to have no justification according the Army's own rules? It is hard to escape the suspicion that, as WikiLeaks has argued on their Twitter account, that a cover-up had occurred.

Barring the appearance of further leaked information, it is likely that these specific questions are ones that we will never know the answer to; yet they bring up other, more important ones. Why have so many journalists died in Iraq? How has this affected the quality of the reporting we see? And what is the significance of WikiLeaks for the future of journalism?

The Iraq war has often been cited as the deadliest in history for journalists. According to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, 161 members of the profession have been killed in Iraq since the conflict began in March 2003, with approximately 2/3 of the deaths consisting of targeted murders.

The Iraq war has often been cited as the deadliest in history for journalists. According to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, 161 members of the profession have been killed in Iraq since the conflict began in March 2003, with approximately 2/3 of the deaths consisting of targeted murders. By comparison, only 63 journalists were killed in the 20 years of the Vietnam War, or 69 in all of World War II. The targeting of journalists began just weeks into the war, when U.S. forces fired missiles at the Baghdad headquarters of Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi TV, killing the Jordanian reporter Tareq Ayyoub. Despite Pentagon claims to the contrary, it is highly unlikely that this was a mistake – Al-Jazeera's Kabul office was bombed during the early days of the Afghanistan war, and following the invasion of Iraq, Al-Jazeera reporters in the United States found their press passes revoked. The network's Iraq offices were permanently shut down in 2004 for allegedly presenting a "negative view of Iraq," and according to a leaked memo published by the Daily Mirror, President Bush reportedly even contemplated bombing their Qatar headquarters as a way of minimizing coverage of civilian casualties during the 2005 siege of Fallujah.

An hour after the attack on the Al-Jazeera office, a U.S. tank fired at Baghdad's Palestine Hotel, famous as the home of the country's foreign correspondents. Two cameramen were killed – a Ukranian named Taras Protsyuk and a Spaniard named José Couso – while three others were wounded. Military spokesmen claimed at the time that they were responding to enemy fire from near the hotel, but former Army sergeant Adrienne Kinne revealed in a 2008 interview with Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now!* that the Palestine Hotel was included on a list of potential targets that was circulated internally prior to the fall of Baghdad, indicating that it was likely a premeditated attack.

Another controversial incident in August 2003 foreshadowed the 2007 deaths of Namir Noor-Elden and Saeed Chmagh, when U.S. soldiers killed the award-winning Palestinian cameraman Mazen Dana outside Abu Ghraib in August 2003. His killers claimed that they mistook his camera for rocket launcher, but he had received permission to film from the soldiers just half an hour beforehand.

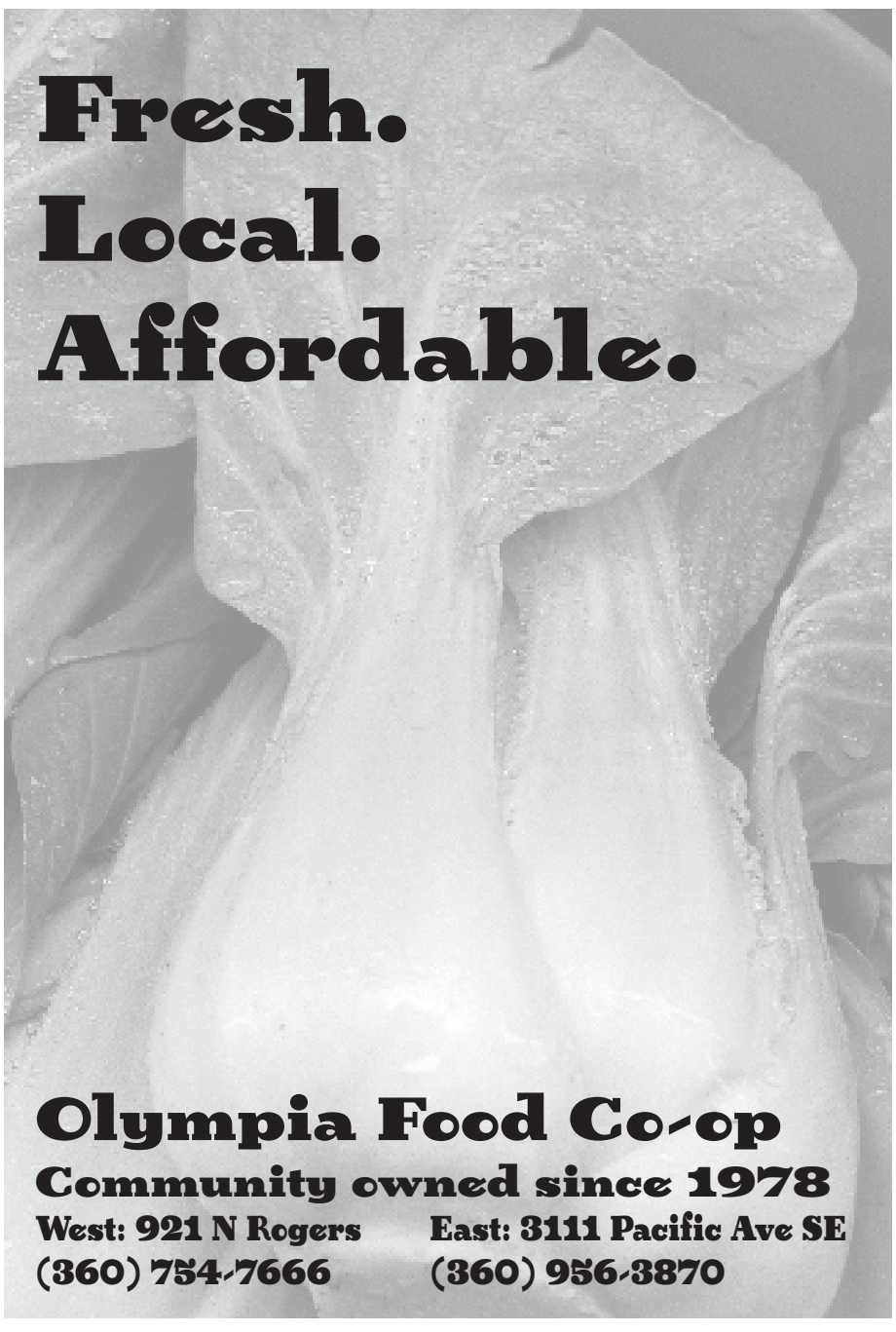
In the early months of the war, however, these targeted killings were the exception rather than the rule. The majority of the reporters who died in 2003 had been killed by crossfire while embedded with U.S. troops, ending up as casualties of a flawed journalistic practice. But as the insurgency escalated, it too had journalists in its sights. The tide began to turn with the assassination of Ahmed Shawkat, the editor of an independent Mosul newspaper who received his first death threat in response to an opinion piece that called for national unity after a car bomb killed an influential Shi'a cleric. As Mosul society disintegrated under the occupation, Shawkat resisted the urgings of both friends and enemies to tone down his incendiary but heartfelt prose. One day in October 2003, an unknown man took the matter into his own hands and shot him in the back.

A year into the war, a busload of employees from the Iraqi Media Network was attacked, leaving reporter Nadia Nasrat dead and several others injured. U.S. Army spokesman Charlie Reiser explained that the IMN was singled out because the broadcasting company is seen by ordinary Iraqis as being little more than American propaganda. In the coming months and years, the logic of targeting reporters based on the supposed or real political affiliation of their employers began to be applied with a terrifying inclusiveness. It would not be long before IMN sports correspondents began to turn up dead. Iraqis working for foreign news agencies received death threats, which were occasionally followed through on, and insurgent groups began taking foreign journalists as hostages. One reporter who worked for a Kurd-owned TV station was gunned down in a drive by shooting. According to eyewitnesses, her assailants chanted "Collaborator! Collaborator!" as they ended her life.

This state of affairs created real dilemmas for journalists. At the beginning of the war, the U.S. military's program of embedding reporters with their troops was ridiculed as a crude attempt to create pro-war propaganda without putting much effort into it. But as the danger to journalists increased, more and more foreign correspondents began to rely on the military to act as their bodyguards. "Reporters who happened to be big, well-fed, American men looked like nothing but big, well-fed, American men," argues war correspondent Ellen Knickmeyer. "For them, to go out into Baghdad indeed was to invite prepping for appearances in grainy hostage videos." The problem for the rest of us is not to condemn journalists who may have embedded themselves with U.S. troops out of real concerns for their safety, but to try and understand how it affects our understanding of what happened in Iraq.

"They got the perspective of sitting inside a Stryker vehicle," says Iraq veteran Josh Simpson on the embedded reporters he met. Simpson stresses that as a soldier, however, he didn't get a good feel for what was going on in Iraq himself, since he spent his time in the country going from military base to military base. "The only time I would really talk to Iraqis was when I was interrogating someone," he recounts. "Sometimes I would go over to their houses, but only when I was kicking down their door." Yet Simpson believes that he got a better view of the country than the average embedded reporter, explaining that "anytime something dangerous was happening, they would go back inside the vehicle, so even when something was happening they wouldn't really see anything." He even dismisses the notion that embedded reporters could play a valuable role by assessing the morale of U.S. soldiers. "When you're in the military, they give you a sheet of answers to tell reporters," Simpson explains. "They tell you what to say…if they ask you this, say this. Most of the times you meet reporters, you read off the script."

Read Part II of this piece in the June issue of Works in Progress.



THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION SPECIAL EDITION MAY 2010

FREE

Works In Progress

20 YEARS OF WIP

WIP's first article

By Wally Cuddeford

When the idea first came up to reprint articles from WIP's 20 year run, I was excited. I couldn't wait to dig into this mother lode of Olympia's social justice history.

My eyes widened a little when I picked up the issue on top of the stack. It was an old, yellowed 8-pager, graced with a banner that read "Live from Thurston County! Works in Progress - SNEAK PREVIEW ISSUE!"

To my delight, I dug into WIP's very first article, written by Robert Richie. It was a well-written and compelling argument for proportional representation, an electoral system used in many places in the world. (The whole article is available on our 20 years webpage at www.olywip.org/20_years .)

Unfortunately though, our friend Rob will live forever in WIP infamy. Poor Rob chose to start WIP's very first article as follows... (Hopefully, Rob has a sense of humor.)

The case for proportional representation

By Robert Richie
May 1990

Imagine it is the year 2000. Spurred by an increasing frustration at the government's inability to confront our nation's problems, a startling reform movement has resulted in the use of proportional representation systems to elect several state legislatures, many county councils and half of the U.S. Congress. *The Daily Olympian* runs the following editorial on the results of the recent national elections:

By Biff Hooper
The Olympian

Tuesday's victory by Cynthia Nicholson in the presidential race caps a remarkable political rise that we believe marks an auspicious beginning to this new millennium. Capitalizing on a massive voter registration effort and broad support from women, environmentalists and the labor community, Ms. Nicholson and the New Democrats gained an impressive victory. Working in coalition with Sen. Jesse Jackson's Rainbows (whose 1998 congressional gains without doubt opened the door for the New Democrats' success), the New Dems have a good opportunity to tackle their ambitious, detailed agenda of "economic justice with ecological sense."

But Nicholson cannot ignore the opposition. Although Sam Nunn ran a disappointing third behind Nicholson and President Quayle, the Democrats still hold respectable blocks in both Houses, as do Quayle's Republicans. Meanwhile, Sen. Pat Robertson's America First Party, although losing support to the Republicans despite Quayle's defeat, continues to voice what many Americans want to hear.

Dear Olympia,

Thank you so much for supporting us for the last 20 years. You are the paper. These 20 years have entirely depended on local submissions and the large cast of volunteers who have worked behind the scenes to put your words and stories into print. We are consistently pleased with what the community has given us. You are the fuel for our *Works In Progress* flame.

It's truly remarkable for this paper to have existed for 20 years. Based on the simple premise of creating an alternative press that focuses on the perspectives of those who would have no forum otherwise, WIP has survived through two decades - a time in which plenty of well-meaning alternative community papers throughout the United States were not able to last (including some here in Olympia). The stories of those beautiful failures likely share a combination of public apathy, insufficient funds, and internal fatigue: problems found insurmountable by the low-paid workers and volunteers who ran those papers. But time and again, even when things looked their bleakest, Olympia refused to let WIP fall permanently into the pages of history.

Currently, the corporate newspaper industry rots away, still profitable, but no longer profitable enough to justify capital investment. Media consolidation and outsourcing continues, eliminating what little viewpoint diversity was left. *The Olympian* withers in its well-earned descent into oblivion, functioning now as a local branch of the *Tacoma News Tribune* (itself a clone of the McClatchy model). If you had told us 20 years ago, when our very first issue began, that WIP would one day outlive *The Olympian*, we would have told you to keep dreaming. Now, it doesn't sound so outlandish at all.

The following section, compiled by WIP's 20 year team, contains a variety of news reporting, personal experiences, and independent analysis from 20 years of *Works In Progress*. By no means are these selections a comprehensive account of the events of two decades, or even a "best of" collection. Simply consider it a photo album of words. While it may be incomplete, there's plenty to reminisce, to recollect, and for some of us (including some of us on the 20 year team) to learn for the first time.

We encourage those who enthusiastically delve into these selections to read closely and see how similar the struggles of the past are similar to the struggles we face today. It was sobering for the archival team to read optimistic proclamations in the early WIP years of a better society just around the corner. In many ways, the struggles have only grown larger. And at the same time, we see that some things have tangibly changed for the better. This is because, despite the odds our community has faced, our determination, our hope, and our spirit have never waned.

With this project complete, and with our fire renewed, the vast archiving project which began here continues. Our website, though updated, is missing most of these 20 years. Corporate newspapers like *The Olympian* see fit to delete articles after two years, thus quietly washing away the history that's so crucial to understanding the events and challenges of today. We have no intention of emulating this model. An understanding of history is imperative. Our short-term goal is to have every issue in WIP's history scanned as images and available online. Long-term, our goal is to have every word that's ever graced WIP's pages posted on our website.

We have enjoyed immersing ourselves in this invaluable, seemingly endless archive in the course of compiling this issue. We hope to share that joy, and the knowledge of our history, with everyone who makes WIP possible.

As the old saying goes, you don't know where you're going until you know where you've been.

Here's to the next 20 years!

Sincerely,
Works In Progress

About the retrospective

This retrospective is the culmination of months of research and discussion by WIP's 20 year crew. It includes over 100 selections from as far back as May 1990, and as recent as March of this year. Each passage was either written by a local writer (well, local enough), or is from a speech given locally, and all of these excerpts appeared before in the pages of WIP.

Instead of arranging this reflection by year, we chose to focus on the different struggles we have faced. To this day, we live on stolen Native land; for this reason, we begin with a brief look at Native struggles over the past 20 years. From there, we followed our hearts...

With few exceptions, the articles contained in this retrospective are excerpts; however, all can be found as originally written on our 20 years web page: **www.olywip.org/20_years** . Dozens more articles, which do not appear in these pages, are also posted to that web page, for a more complete reflection of the last 20 years of social justice history.

We invite you to take a moment to dive into this rich vein of Olympia's history, and discover something you never knew you never knew.

By Tristan Baurick
April 2000

Back up a few seconds to when you first turned to this page. What attracted your eye? What engaged your attention first? Chances are, it was the simple combination of images and words contained in the cartoons.

Political cartoonist Matt Wuerker understands that in a culture dominated by images, his work can have a great impact in shaping people's views. Cartoons are simple and direct. They get their point across immediately and gain the attention of viewers more often than the text that surrounds.

Wuerker takes his job seriously. To him a cartoon that confronts important social issues is not entertainment. It's politics.

Read Tristan's interview with Matt Weurker, whose political cartoons frequently grace the pages of WIP, at www.olywip.org/20_years.

WHAT?!! THE ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN MISLEADING US?!!
Twisted Times
9-11 ATTACK NOT CONNECTED TO IRAQ
TAX CUTS FOR THE VERY RICH HELP THE POOR
LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND HUGE SUCCESS
SOC SECURITY MUST BE PRIVATIZED TO BE SAVED
GLOBAL WARMING? NO PROBLEM
STAR WARS
WMD
M. WUERKER

The Quincentennial

By Mary McLaughlin, Arthur Miller, and Pete Murney
April 1992

The Columbus Quincentennial is undoubtedly raising the issues of historical injustice and cultural genocide, but these issues are being raised with all eyes squarely on the past. Our crocodile tears will not help Crazy Horse and will do even less for his descendants. Reality in Indian country today means nearly total unemployment and forced sterilization and forced relocation and malnutrition. It means having the highest rate of infant mortality and the lowest life expectancy. It means chronic injustice and political assassination. All these things are acts of war, pure and simple. The citizens of the US need to not only recognize that these things occur, but also recognize the degree to which they profit from their occurrence. This is especially true of people who count themselves as part of the movement for progressive social change in this country, because the moral integrity of the movement, like the moral integrity of the nation, rests with its ability to face the wrongs still being done to the Native people of North America. The struggles to stop relocation at Big Mountain and gain justice for Leonard Peltier are both good places to start.

The swoop on Frank's Landing

By Daisy Ouye
June 2007

"I thought there must have been a murder down there or something." This was the response of a Nisqually Wildlife Refuge employee to the excessive number of police vehicles blocking the main road leading to Frank's Landing Smoke Shop. "I told my crew it must be something serious to use all those resources."

He, like many others familiar with the Frank's Landing Native Community, was angered to hear of the raid on the smoke shop located on tribal land in Nisqually. Even more upsetting was the home raid on the shop's owners, Hank and Alison Gottfriedson.

On the early morning of May 15, armed federal agents with search dogs invaded this small peaceful community. That day Billy Frank, along with many other tribal leaders were finalizing an agreement on shellfish gathering that's been 17 years in the making during the same time the raids were carried out. Was this a coincidence?

Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms worked in cooperation with Washington State Liquor Control Board Tobacco Tax Unit and the US Attorneys Office in Seattle. Climbing through bushes with guns raised, they approached the home of the Gottfriedsons: Hank, Alison, and their two granddaughters, 10 and 11 years old.

One of the girls heard the noises outside and opened the door as officers prepared to plow it down with a battering ram. The girls were taken outside at gunpoint, in their pajamas and patted down. Obviously, this is not standard procedure. When Hank asked if the girls could at least go inside and get dressed, the federal agents stepped aside to discuss whether or not these children could put clothes on, finally deciding they weren't a threat.

"They scared the heck out of my grandkids," said Alison Gottfriedson. "They took both the computers and they trashed the whole house."

"They trashed her bedroom," said Maiselle Bridges, Alison's mother, noting the level of invasion on her daughter's home. Maiselle is an honored elder and head caretaker for Wa He Lut Indian School. The smoke shop was also raided and the entire stock of cigarettes was confiscated.

"Operation Chainsmoker" consisted of seven search warrants targeting two Oregon wholesalers, four Native smoke shops and two private homes. Law enforcement calls these raids a continuation of an operation carried out in 2003, in which allegedly untaxed cigarettes were confiscated from several other native smoke shops.

Frank's Landing Native Community has been negotiating for a state compact since December 2005, and the government has not yet made an offer that wouldn't put Frank's Landing out of business. "They need to come to the table," said Alison.

The Yakima Nation is also negotiating with the state. They say they will accept the state's demand to work out issues of the compact, but that the tax has caused destruction to the tribal economy and people. 19 of 29 Washington Native Communities have these compacts or state contracts to collect taxes that are used to support tribal programs. Proceeds from Frank's Landing smoke shop are used for supplies and equipment at Wa He Lut Indian school, teaching native studies to native children without tuition. It also funds programs that help the poor and the tribes' mental health care programs. All of these funds have been frozen by "Operation Chainsmoker."

For the purpose of reaffirming the US government's commitment to tribal sovereignty and self-determination, President Bill Clinton issued a revised Executive Order in 2000 on consultation and coordination with Native Tribal Government. It was proclaimed to ensure that all Executive departments and agencies consult with Native tribes and respect tribal sovereignty as the agencies consider policy initiatives that affect Native communities.

The Frank's Landing Native Community, and this family in particular, were at the forefront of a nationwide struggle in the 1970s to keep fishing rights promised to them by the Medicine Creek Treaty. For over a decade they endured night raids, tear gas, clubbings and beatings, stealing of their nets and sinking of their boats. They have held a culture celebrated here for thousands of years, with strength, dignity and perseverance.

"Alison was two and a half the first time she saw a raid," said Maiselle. After the recent raids, Maiselle told me she looked down at her youngest great-grandchild, who is six months old, and wondered if he too, would endure similar treatment on his ancestral land.

"They need to stop the attacks on Frank's Landing," said Alison. "They need to honor the treaties."

The federal government needs to explain how they are following Clinton's order while freezing funds to essential programs, seizing property and forcefully invading homes of Native people. Governor Christine Gregoire and the State of Washington need to explain how they can help coordinate raids during negotiations, and finally, someone needs to be accountable for the ill-treatment of the Gottfriedson's grandchildren.

Cultural genocide: New Age Desecration

By Sarah Light
October 1991

"Our spirituality is not for sale." Andy Smith, a Cherokee woman.

Racism has many faces. A particularly insidious one is that of the "exotic other." This form of racism, as practiced by the white new-age movement, portrays indigenous peoples as spiritual gurus. Native people are expected to provide one-size-fits-all miracle "Indian religion" for public consumption. Their cultures are viewed as romantic, ethnic environments for the white imagination to dream in.

While the white new-agers roam, they are continuing a pattern of genocide. We can kill people for following their spiritual traditions, or we can kill them by saying that we are them – we speak for them, market them, consume them. The result is the same.

As a survivor of a 10-year journey in the new-age movement, I am particularly sensitive to this form of racism. I observed many occasions of white people ripping off native cultures. Participants in this abuse claimed past lives as Indians, or declared a gift for channeling disincarnate "Indian spirits." Books were written, lectures given, sweat-lodges constructed. Prestige was gained, and money was certainly made.

No one ever spoke of broken treaties. And no one mentioned that the average life expectancy for Native American people is 47 years.

I have chosen to look for strength and inspiration from my own ancestors in Ireland and Scotland. There, I find earth based spiritual traditions rich in community. And I have discovered that even these traditions are being trampled on. Sacred sites are vandalized and commercialized. New-age tourists buy crystals, perform ceremonies, and are arrogantly insensitive to the local people.

If we truly want to build bridges, we need to stop trivializing, interpreting, and stealing from indigenous peoples. Often the best way to show respect for a culture is to LEAVE IT ALONE.

Racist backlash to whale hunt

By Jerome Johnson
June 1999

When the Makah began training for the [whale] hunt last year, the resistance that culminated in the current backlash began. Like many Native Americans and other people of color, I was outraged by the spectacle of middle/upper-class white folks once again telling us how we should live and follow our traditions. Eco-liberals in their boats like the Sea Shepherd showed their ignorance and racism by using bully tactics to oppose the hunt, while remaining silent and idle as poverty and lack of education plague Native communities every day. The white, privileged eco-liberals literally threaten violence against the Makah, as evidenced by the signs in Seattle during their candlelight vigil on May 17th ("Save the whales - kill a Makah"), while portraying themselves as life-loving peaceful demonstrators.

But on the banners, as well as the letters to op-ed pages and calls to TV and radio shows, the raw, naked racism continues to show itself. Native schools all over western Washington have received threates of violence specifically related to the whale hunt. I've heard Native people blamed for the pollution of the environment, the destruction of the salmon and deer and elk, when the reality is precisely the opposite. It was the genocidal advent of "western civilization" and the continuing ravage of capitalism (timber, commercial fishing and other industries) which ruin our Earth and the creatures in it. The atmosphere has become so dangerous that whites as well as Natives and other people of color are at risk.

Coast Guard personnel in Washington have been ordered to keep a low profile, wearing their uniforms as little as possible. As guardians of the Makah during the hunt, they too have become potential targets of racist violence.

I understand that there are some animal-rights activists who are not racist, who are genuinely concerned about the whales. I'm sorry they've been so silent in the face of the current controversy.

Wa He Lut: a community school

From WIP News Service
March 1995

With permission from the super-intendent and principal of Wa He Lut Indian School, I'd like to tell you about this sanctuary for children to have a safe place to learn and grow. It was painful to me, a non-Native, to hear the comment from one of these wonderful men that they hoped someone would write something good about Indians. I thought these were things of the past and that we humans understood we were sharing this world. I see I keep my head in the sand assuming we all are accepting of each other. One of my favorite sayings is "We are all related." This is a Native saying that I take as truth.

Wa He Lut Indian School began in 1974, on a small tract of land belonging to Willie Frank. Members of the Frank's Landing Community wanted educational excellence for their children in a safe, cultural atmosphere. In 1975 the school was first certified by Washington State for educational instruction.

In 1980, U.S. Senator Warren Magnusen secured lands for the school current site from the U.S. Army. The school is funded by continuing grants from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Even though the school is primarily funded by grants from BIA, the school is allotted $2,967.00 per student as opposed to $54,967.00 per student in a public school system. This is amazing management of money. The school is in the process of building a new gymnasium. They use the school vans to take the children on educational field trips and provide school supplies. The need for extra money is an issue, such as the need for fabric and materials to make the children's regalia, the costumes of their culture they wear for Pow Wows.

Each child is encouraged to place a high value on his or her own culture, while respecting the cultural diversity of others. As part of our ongoing cultural program, students participate in numerous activities designed to achieve a high level of cultural awareness. Elders and community members work with the school to provide a traditional perspective to the academic program.

The School has an excellent student-to-teacher ratio of ten to fifteen students to every classroom teacher. Additionally, each class has a teacher's aide, and often has work-study students and volunteers. This causes a ratio of five to seven children per adult.

Wa He Lut feels it is vital for each child to develop a positive self-concept by learning the importance of respect for self, peers, personal property, and the laws of the community and the country, and the environment. The school's counselor is available to assist children with issues of self-esteem and social skills.

Slade Gorton withdraws his Anti-Tribal Sovereignty Act

By Arthur J. Miller
June 1998

Senator Slade Gorton has withdrawn his so-called "American Indian Equal Justice Act" which would limit tribal sovereignty. Should we view this as a victory? We do not think so.

Sen. Slade Gorton has a very long history of anti-tribal activities. He knows what he is doing and he has stated a number of times that his goal is the elimination of tribal sovereignty and tribal treaty rights. He knows that he cannot accomplish his goal with one big sweep. Rather, he is trying to do it by piece work. He is going after tribal money. If he can drain tribal money with taxes and lawsuits, the First Nations will have a hard time resisting his next moves.

Many people view Sen. Gorton as one individual with his own agenda. The fact is that Sen. Gorton has been the point man in the senate for the "Wise Use" movement, backed by major timber, mining, energy and development corporations.

Sen. Gorton gained a lot from his bill. What he was able to do was to manipulate the focus of the debate. And that focus was the idea that this is only a non-tribal vs. tribal issue. At the Tukwila hearings, and I would guess at the other hearings also, the only non-tribal people who spoke were those that had some type of gripe with the tribes. No attempt was made to present non-tribal people who get along with the tribes and support them. The whole image was that non-tribal people are being victimized by the tribes.

The OCA comes to Washington

By Joli Sandoz
January 1993

The Oregon Citizens' Alliance (OCA) last month revealed plans to move into Washington state. Office locations under consideration include Olympia, Tacoma and south Seattle.

According to OCA head Lon Mabon, the chances of the OCA coming to Washington are "very likely - above 95%. Our goal at this point is to set up an official chapter." Such a group, he said, would "deal with every issue, from land use to taxes to economic issues."

The OCA recently sponsored Measure 9, an Oregon ballot initiative which would have barred civil rights protections for lesbians and gays while officially classing homosexuality with pedophilia, sadism, and masochism in labeling such "behaviors" "abnormal, unnatural and perverse." Voters defeated Measure 9 at the polls, 742,271 to 564,232 (57 percent to 43 percent). A less-strongly worded anti-gay initiative passed in Colorado.

Mabon said that his group is currently redrafting Ballot Measure 9, and that the OCA "would probably file the [redrafted] initiative in all three states [Oregon, Washington, and Idaho]. We want to spend the first year organizing, and the second [1994] working on the initiative."

Local affectional minority civil rights activist Richard Kirton, president of the Washington Freedom Coalition, said in a separate interview that his organization has launched a petition drive calling on state legislators to "declare the state a hate and bigotry free zone, adopt a gay and lesbian human rights bill, and pass a hate crimes bill which passes constitutional muster and includes sexual/affectional orientation."

The OCA's only direct electoral success has come at the expense of gay men and lesbians. In 1988, the group backed a referendum whih overturned then-governor [of Oregon] Neil Goldschmidt's executive order banning anti-gay discimination in state agencies. That success was limited, however; ironically, the Oregon Court of Appeals declared the 1988 anti-gay rights measure unconstitutional just days after the acrimonious and expensive campaign to pass Measure 9 failed.

Gay Rights / Special Rights.....the movie

By Joli Sandoz
December 1993

Gordon Wysong calls it "the single most useful resource I have seen on the issue." Mark McNeil terms it "an extremely effective tool." But Farai Chideya, writing in Time magazine, analyzes it as "a cynical appeal" to homophobia. The subject in question? A 40-minute video called *Gay Rights / Special Rights: Inside the Homosexual Agenda*. The film aired in Thurston County over public-access channel TCTV during August and September.

From first to last, *Gay Rights / Special Rights* (GRSR) seems designed to spark controversy. The photograph on the package shows a man holding a sign reading "I'm gay and I teach AMERICA'S CHILDREN". Behind him looms the dome of the U.S. Capitol. The film's opening sequence juxtaposes dignified shots of Martin Luther King Jr. with an unflattering clip of AIDS activist Larry Kramer. And the closing scene shows two men kissing as Mississippi Senator Trent Lott intones "this will be one further degradation of a great country."

Traditional Values, a nationwide Religious Right organization headed by Rev. Lou Sheldon, released and currently distributes GRSR. Locally televised showings of the video were sponsored by the Thurston County Alliance (TCA). TCA chair Gene Martel has described the group as a "Christian-based organization committed to preserving constitutional freedoms and the promotion of godly values in society." TCA members declined to attend a televised TCTV forum about the video.

GRSR is the latest in a line of Religious Right anti-gay videos stretching back into the 1980s, according to the editors of The Dignity Report. They note that another anti-gay effort called The Gay Agenda, also distributed in Washington state this year by gay rights opponents, uses the same "slick editing techniques" coupled with interviews with self-described former gays and "dubious experts". But GRSR, they say – in its smoother production which makes "factual accuracy and logical consistency" unnecessary, and in its implication that anti-gay activists are the "true champions of civil rights" – represents a new generation of "Christian Right propaganda techniques."

This summer and fall anti-gay rights activists around the U.S. began using GRSR as an organizing tool. Mark McNeil, quoted in the opening paragraph of this article, heads Equal Rights-Not Special Rights, a group which sponsored a broadcast of GRSR over local TV while working to roll back Cincinnati's gay rights ordinance. Voters did approve the repeal at the polls November 3.

Gordon Wysong, also quoted in the first paragraph, led a unique anti-gay rights effort. Wysong, a Cobb County, Georgia commissioner, sponsored a successful resolution objecting to homosexuality as incompatible with "community standards" after a local theater group had staged productions of "M. Butterfly", by David Henry Hwang, and Terrence McNally's "Lips Together, Teeth Apart". According to news reports, the latter play refers to gays but has no gay characters.

Two weeks after passing the resolution, believed to be the first to condemn, not "special rights" for lesbians, gays and bisexuals but homosexuality itself, Cobb County commissioners voted 5-0 to remove all county funding from Cobb County arts organizations. In addition to the theater group, eight other organizations are affected, among them a children's theater, a symphony orchestra and an art museum.

Bettina Boxall, writing in the October 15 issue of the Los Angeles Times, places anti-gay GRSR in a context of efforts by gay-rights supporters, including a television advertisement revealing that one of the veterans honored at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was gay. Warnings of ruin and sexual menace on the one hand, and calls for equality on the other, are "classic" techniques. But, she adds, gays are at a disadvantage in this debate, as they work to frame their civil rights as an issue of justice compared to opponents' anti-gay spin. Millions of Americans watch or read religious media, which often carries arguments against gay rights; the resources of gay groups are small compared to those of conservative organizations; and polls reveal that most Americans rank the popularity of gays below that of many "ethnic, religious and political groups."

As GRSR closes, Mississippi Senator Trent Lott, standing in front of an American flag, sums the video's message. As he speaks, the camera pans from his face to two men kissing in front of the Capitol, a rainbow flag rippling behind their heads. Finally viewers have an unimpeded view of the Capitol itself. "Values are very important. I think that's what made America great," Lott says. "And this [legal protections against discrimination for lesbians, gays and bisexuals] will be one further degradation of a great country. And we cannot allow it to happen.

"What's at stake is not only the future of our boys and girls, but also what's at stake is the future of America."

Emotion seems to be part of almost every gay rights debate, an inseparable part of the controversy Boxall calls "America's latest morality play". In Washington state, the emotion and the issue which sparks it won't go away soon. Two groups, the Citizens Alliance of Washington [Washington's affiliate of the Oregon Citizens' Alliance] and the Washington Public Affairs Council, have announced plans to file January initiatives which, if passed by voters, would prevent government "endorsement" of bisexuals, lesbians and gays.

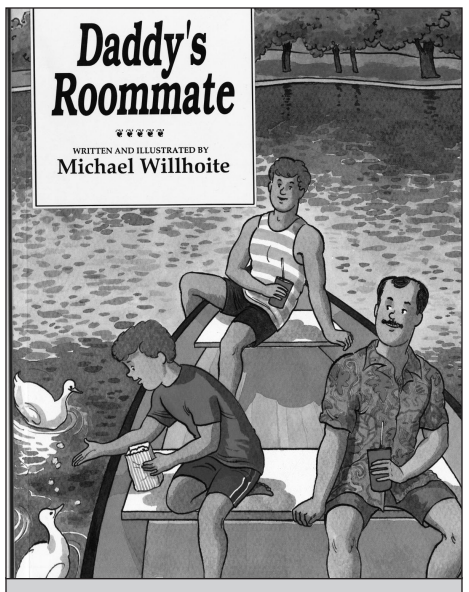
Children's book survives censorship attempt

By Curt Pavola
April 1992

"I tell ya folks," Yelm resident Rex Niblack warned the Timberland Regional board of trustees, "ten years from now we will see the pedophilia society promoting their books and the Aryan Nation promoting their books that shape those minds about racism." These words set the tenor of the debate for a Timberland board meeting on February 26 during which the library's governing body considered a complaint about a children's book. The book was *Daddy's Roommate*, by Michael Willhoite.

The majority of the book's opponents cited the Holy Bible as a source of information about homosexuality, and all expressed the concern that children should not be exposed to discussions of this aspect of human nature. The supporters of *Daddy's Roommate* disagreed.

"This move really has little to do with the book or with homosexuality or with fathers who are gay," said local author Joel Davis. "I think it has very much to do with fear. Fear of the perceived different, fear of the unknown. History is filled with examples of the true antidote to fear: not suppression or censorship, but understanding and love."



The book that destroyed civilization.

"I'm sorry you have that [fear]," offered [Michael Perez] Gibson. "The world is not changing. The world is as it's always been. You heard these people up here tonight. They're no longer in the closet. This is the world, and trying to hold on to something that you think might have been, I can't help you with that."

PFLAG fights for partners' benefits

By PFLAG
December 2001

Local chapters of Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays have launched a project to educate the Salvation Army about the danger of their discriminatory policies towards gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) people.

PFLAG members will drop notices, or "Queer Dollars," in Salvation Army kettles in lieu of a donation throughout the holiday season. The project was conceived by PFLAG Genesee County, Michigan and has been adopted by many of PFLAG's 470 affiliates nationwide. PFLAG Genesee County's "reminder bills" state "I would have donated $5 dollars, but the Salvation Army's decision to discriminate against gay and lesbian employees prevents my donation now and in the future. Change your discriminatory policy."

Mary Scholl, President of PFLAG's Genesee County chapter says, "We support organizations working to address poverty in our communities. However, we cannot support an organization that discriminates against our loved ones. We intend to give to charitable organizations that understand and accept gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons as equal citizens, entitled to the same consideration as every other person."

Plans to use the Salvation Army's red kettles as an educational vehicle were already underway when the national Salvation Army derailed a new policy of their western division granting benefits to Salvation Army employees' domestic partners. Earlier this month the Salvation Army announced a new national policy denying their divisions the power to set employee benefits and limiting coverage to heterosexual spouses and dependent children.

The religious right retools...

By Anna Schlecht
September 2004

In less than a year, conservative religious activists have re-tooled their weapons for their ground war against marriage equality. The result is a kinder, gentler homophobia still bent on reversing every gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered civil rights gains of the past 20 years. High on their list is amending first our State Constitution and then the Federal Constitution to ban same-gender marriage.

This shift represents a significant sea change in their rhetoric. In earlier, un-kinder times, anti-gay activists looked no further than their Bibles, ignoring the thousands of references to love and acceptance and zeroing in on the few sections that address same-gender relations. In public hearings on local gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) civil rights measures, these activists would invoke Sodom and Gomorrah, hellfire and brimstone and generally present themselves as intolerant zealots.

After a solid decade of losing every anti-gay initiative campaign and failing to defeat even a single local ordinance to protect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered civil rights, they realized that the public would not accept hate as a family value. So they went back to the drawing board. The result has been a new wave of smooth, benign-sounding propaganda that avoids extremist religious references and replaces that with a compassionate understanding of the "homosexual problem" and a calmly stated defense of what they term "traditional marriage." As with all professionally managed message campaigns, their new slogans sound reasonable to the general public. In spite of the new approach, they have the same goals to eradicate GLBT civil rights.

The scene at the first annual Gay Pride March and Rally in Olympia - Photo by Dave Campbell, as printed in the August 1991 WIP

Standing up for easy access to birth control

By Janet Blanding
August 2006

Protecting the rights of medical consumers to have their prescriptions filled promptly is looking more promising at state level, but locally, Olympia women are still facing hurdles in having their legal prescriptions filled. The Washington State Board of Pharmacy, in an apparent response to intense negative public reaction, has decided to revise its proposed rule that would allow pharmacists to refuse to fill prescriptions for any reason, including reasons of "conscience." The owners of Ralph's Thriftway and Bayview Thriftway, however, have proven less responsive to the community as they dig in their heels and refuse to change their unpopular policy of not stocking emergency contraception.

The battle over contraceptive access is being fought fiercely on a local level, as many irate Olympians have chosen to boycott Ralph's and Bayview. Picketing began at Ralph's on June 28 with a large turnout; at one point there were 120 people picketing the sidewalks on both sides of 4th Avenue and State St. On that first day, 130 people signed cards pledging to boycott Ralph's. During the next three weeks of picketing, another 220 Olympians pledged not to shop at Ralph's. Altogether, estimated monthly lost sales for Ralph's and Bayview total over $60,000 a month.

CROSSWALK
A GROCER IS NOT A DOCTOR
BOYCOTT PROTECT HEALTHCARE FOR WOMEN.
IS EVERY SPERM SACRED?
I DEMAND ACCESS To
PLAN B IS SAFE Birth Control
Respect womens Choice
PLAN B IS BIRTH CONTROL

Picketers stand up for women's right to easy access to birth control - Photo by Krista Theiss, August 2006

Welfare and single motherhood

By Monica Peabody
June 2007

Fresh from a closeted, abusive relationship, I didn't have much of a community, but I began to meet other single mothers in my low-rent apartment complex and at the parks and grocery stores. No one better understood what I was going through; we shared information and recounted the traumas of poverty and single-parenthood. Whenever I mentioned a nasty encounter with a welfare caseworker, it always elicited the same response: "Call WROC." So I did. I learned my rights and was given the tools and encouragement to stand up to unfair caseworkers.

When my daughter was a toddler, the FIP program ended. Despite FIP's success, the policy makers deemed FIP too expensive in the short term. By success, I mean that women were finishing their degrees, competing for living wage jobs and leaving assistance for good. The FIP recipients I know now own homes and have jobs with benefits that pay living wages and have not needed state assistance for years. Unfortunately, current welfare policies force single parents into a revolving-door life of poverty -- constantly being shoved from welfare benefits, to entry level low-paying jobs, and then back to benefits again -- never allowing them to escape the cycle of poverty that entraps them.

Local pro-choice forces assert rights of women

By WIP News Service
October 1998

A peaceful but exuberant crowd of pro-choice students and others gathered on Conger St. in Olympia to counter the effects of the traveling roadshow that is Operation Rescue on Monday, Sep. 21. Signs reading "Anti-Choice = Anti-Women" and "NO 694: Pro-Choice Voter!" lined the sidewalk in front of Capital High School, one of the targets of Operation Rescue's anti-choice procession.

The pro-choice crowd was vocal and initiated communication with passing vehicles whose drivers honked in support of pro-choice efforts.

The Operation Rescue entourage moved on to Sound Choice Health Center in Olympia, the site of last year's picket. They were met by scores of pro-choice women and men, and forced to share sidewalk space and compete for attention which is drawn easily due to their gory signs that oversimplify and trivialize abortion rights.

Various groups are banding together to fight Initiative 694, an initiative on the November ballot. Among these groups are Washington State National Organization of Women (NOW), WA State National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL), Planned Parenthood of Western Washington and affiliates, the ACLU of Washington, and the WA State Medical Association. Once again, the religious right rears its ugly head in an attempt to roll back abortion rights law on the road to banning all abortions.

I-694 is a poorly written initiative that would ban some late-term abortions; the method of abortion used in the most extreme of circumstances. The type of late-term abortion I-694 targets are extremely rare and only used to save the life or health of the woman. I-694 would override the medical decision that should ultimately occur between a woman and her doctor. The initiative is poorly written in an attempt to change the legal definition of abortion. This would allow differing interpretations of procedures that are currently legal and have been fought for over many years by pro-choice and women's rights groups.

In 1970, 1984, and 1991, voters in Washington State indicated that they would protect a woman's right to safe and legal abortions. This attempt at dismantling abortion rights piece by piece is one tactic that anti-choice groups use to pave the way for dismantling abortion rights even further.

The sponsor of I-694 was a lead fundraiser for religious right gubernatorial candidate Ellen Craswell and much of the funds for this initiative come from members of the fringe America Heritage Party.

The people behind this initiative are religious political extremists, and even some well-intentioned people who have been deceived by the rhetoric. Ultimately, women's rights to abortion are being attacked. Will our state stand firmly pro-choice, or fall prey to voter apathy or mis-education?

Anita Hill rally

On October 15, 1992, NOW sponsored an Anita Hill march and rally in Olympia. The previous year, Anita had testified against the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court. Her testimony brought the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace into the public consciounsess in a way nothing had before.

What follows is one speech from that rally, delivered on the steps of the State Capitol, as printed in the November 1992 issue of *Works In Progress*.

By Judith Brighton
November 1992

A *U.S. News* poll recently reported that in 1991, 60 percent of Americans polled were inclined to "believe" Clarence Thomas, while only 29 percent "believed" Anita Hill. The most recent poll taken by *U.S. News* indicates quite a turnaround in public opinion. In 1992 only 38 percent of Americans polled by U.S. News "believe" Clarence Thomas declarations of innocence and 38 percent reported their inclination to believe Anita Hill's allegations of sexual harassment.

Things have changed.

Things have changed for a reason. Victims of workplace sexual harassment are no longer silent. Women are talking to each other. Women are talking to their harassers. Women are talking to their employers. But most importantly – women are talking to their lawyers!

Now America is beginning to have a dollars and cents concept of the cost of sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers in both the public and private sector are realizing just how high the cost can be.

Workplace education for both employers and employees is a good place to start dealing with this long-standing problem, but it's still too little, too late.

Our kids are barraged each day by false and harmful images of women. The media's education of our children starts early. Our sons see women portrayed as sexual objects to be enjoyed like glasses of cold beer. The most powerful woman our daughters are likely to see is Madonna, communicating that sex is power. On prime-time television every night, women are demeaned and joked about in ways that would not be tolerated by any other minority.

Let's stop giving our money to companies whose advertising insults and exploits women. And let them know why you won't do business with them. Cut your cable – at least make a decision about what you want in your home – and let the cable companies know you don't approve of their message about women.

Talk to your kids. By the time they get to the workplace, it could be too late.

Fighting rape in the military

By Janet Blanding
September 2006

According to her mother, Sara Rich, Suzanne Swift was sent to Iraq almost immediately after joining the army, where she was unable to protect herself from sexual assaults by two of her superior officers. Rich described the sexual assault suffered by her daughter as "command rape," a term which refers to situations in which a commanding officer, who has the power to put a victim in dangerous situations, uses that status to coerce sexual favors. "It's when a person has total control over your life or death in a combat zone. They can tell you to run across a minefield, and you have to comply," explains Rich. "If they coerce you or do something with you that's sexual, it's called command rape." Rich believes that this practice is condoned by the military, and says that women who are trapped in sexually coercive relationships of this nature are commonly referred to as "deployment girlfriends."

Oppression of women in Afghanistan

By Jacquelyn Cole
November 2001

Once the Taliban gained control of the majority of Afghanistan, including Kabul, the capital, they set out to achieve their stated objectives. However, the Taliban's interpretation of shari'a represented a radical divergence from any previous interpretation, in Afghanistan or elsewhere in the Muslim world. The Taliban's laws restricted women's lives drastically in many areas. The new laws banned Afghani women from attending school, seeking health care, and from employment. Women were fired from their jobs, and girls' schools were closed. Additionally, it was deemed too dangerous for women to be seen in public, so it became mandatory for women to cover themselves from head to toe. If women had to go out, they were to be escorted by a male relative.

Under the new laws, Afghani women lost many of their rights. Before 1996, when the Taliban came to power, women had theoretically enjoyed broad freedoms under the 1964 Constitution. They were allowed to work, receive education, and participate in politics. In the 1970s, some urban women from the upper classes began to adopt "Western" ways, such as dressing in the "Western" fashion, although not all elements of society approved of this. Yet, all this changed when the Taliban came to power.

The Taliban's oppression of women has been challenged on many fronts; by Western feminists, aid workers in Afghanistan, and Muslims throughout the world, to name a few. The United States government has also condemned the Taliban for its treatment of women. While there are several possible approaches to ameliorate the situation of Afghani women, it is ironic that the United States is bombing the country whose citizens it has expressed concern for.

Amadou Diallo

By Jerome Johnson
April 2000

I didn't know Amadou Diallo, but I grieve for his death. I grieve for him, and for Patrick Dorismund and Danny Spencer, and everyone else who is dead or imprisoned because of our "Just us" system.

This [current] continuum began in 1979-80, during Ronald Reagan's run for president. Whether it was racism, sexism, or homophobia, Reagan made white people – especially white police – very comfortable with their prejudices. Like all politicians he used "crime" as a campaign issue – and whenever Reagan talked about "crime," he talked about poor black neighborhoods and "welfare queens."

Like everyone else, police come from mainstream society. Racism is an undeniable part of the American mainstream, and racism has always been part of American policing. During this period, "racial profiling" was developed, which in turn led to the well-known "offense" of DWB – driving while black. People of color began to be stopped and searched and harassed for no reason. In the cities, it became common for white cops to abuse minority citizens, often brutally. In this climate, what's "self-defense" for whites is "murder" for blacks; asking questions is "obstructing an officer"; and legal defense is trusting your luck to an overworked DA who is usually personal friends with prosecutors.

I believe that Officer Carroll – like his teammates on the NYPD and all over the country – are products of this terrible continuum of 20 years racism and unchecked police power. Based on their "training" and the background of growing up white in Reagan-Bush America, a wallet looked like a gun, because it was in a black person's hand. [Diallo] thought he'd reach for his ID, and was killed for it.

Protests intensify against racist checkpoints

By Stop the Checkpoints Committee
November 2008

Incensed at Border Patrol roadblocks that stop every car and check drivers' nationalities, over 200 demonstrators took to the streets on Sept. 20 in Port Angeles, Washington. The demonstration was sparked by a protest three weeks earlier by the classmates of two teenagers who were detained on Aug. 20. Both were swiftly deported to Mexico, despite the fact that both young men grew up in Forks, a small coastal town. One of them, Edgar Ayala, 18, had just graduated with honors from the local high school. Protest organizer Tanya Ward, a tribal member from the Hoh reservation near Forks, said, "Just as Native Americans were pushed aside and shoved onto reservations, they want to do the same thing to immigrants. Who gives them the right?"

Feelings were already running high in reaction to frequent security spot-checks at the ferry docks. In June ferry worker John Norby, backed by his union, blew the whistle and refused to cooperate when an undercover Border Patrol agent attempted to recruit him to spy on passengers.

By August, increased funding for the Border Patrol resulted in 45 permanently stationed agents in this sparsely populated, economically depressed area. In the last month, the Patrol, assisted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and local police, have repeatedly set up unannounced checkpoints at several locations along Highway 101. Twenty-five people were detained -- 10 for minor drug offenses and 14 for not carrying proper immigration papers.

Hey, what happened?

Given the magnitude of this retrospective project, it was impossible for the volunteer WIP staff to check up on most of these stories to find out if there are any updates.

If you do follow up on a story, please let us know! We'd love to print your update in a future issue.

Wanted: A new black protest movement

By Dr. Manning Marable
July 1992

Although the fires of Los Angeles have temporarily died down, the recent racial insurrection in the streets highlights a fundamental problem now squarely confronting black politics. Increasingly, there is a growing gap between many African-American politicians and civil rights leaders and the militant mood of millions of young inner-city and working class blacks, who are fed up with the system.

The Rodney King case, as well as the national controversy surrounding the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas debate last year, indicates a breakdown of political consensus among black American's political elite. Most African-American leaders still believe in the old political strategy of unquestioned loyalty toward the Democratic Party, and what can be called the tactics of "symbolic representation."

Blacks have been told for generations that if another African-American from the upper middle class is appointed to a high position in the legal system, elected governor or to Congress, that the entire race is empowered. "Symbolic representation" means that because a Clarence Thomas is black, he shares our common history of racial oppression, and therefore he'll look out for our interests once he's safely in office. The problem with these assumptions is that they ignore that class identity and ideological commitments frequently outweigh racial membership in a politician's behavior. Thomas may be "racially black," but politically and ideologically he's hostile to African-American interests. Therefore, he should have been vigorously rejected and opposed. Why some leaders couldn't comprehend this speaks to their basic confusion about the new political approach we need now.

The same problem exists with blacks' relations with the Democratic Party. The majority of African-American people agree that our political process stinks, and that the system rarely yields real choices for us. Black voter turnout slipped down to 44 percent in the 1988 presidential contest largely due to widespread alienation. Yet the truth is that neither the Democrats nor the Republicans, by themselves, will ever initiate a progressive agenda for domestic reconstruction, rebuilding the cities, establishing universal, public health care, and attacking discrimination. We must explore new avenues to pressure the Democrats from outside the party's ranks. Conversely, black conservatives' arguments advocating that blacks fall loyally behind Bush, Buchanan and Quayle, are of course advising us to leap from the political frying pan into the fire.

The Los Angeles uprising illustrated that most middle class black leaders are totally out of touch with the hip-hop, rap generation. Today's black youths are so alienated that they have been forced to resuscitate a black leader who died a quarter century ago – Malcolm X – because he symbolizes their current militancy and rage far better than Jesse Jackson or anyone else alive and on the political scene today.

We must revive the tradition of black protest in America, if we are to have any hope to influence public policies and to empower the black community. This will require new strategies, new organizations and a new philosophy of political power.

Okay, we lied. Not everyone in this retrospective is local. But Dr. Marable's national column "Along the Color Line" did grace the pages of *Works in Progress* for almost 15 years. Dr. Marable currently serves as professor of African-American studies, public affairs, and history at Columbia University in New York.

Response to a critique of affirmative action

By Jose Gomez
February 1992

Hall says that "the use of quotas and preferential hiring is extremely problematic and at best represents a Pyrrhic victory." He blames affirmative action for three excessive costs: the loss of "societal cohesion and racial tolerance," the "repoliticization of race," and the stigmatization of persons perceived to have been beneficiaries of affirmative action. However, this is an incomplete analysis. In his zeal to discredit affirmative action, Hall forgets or conveniently fails to examine the benefit side of the equation. He dismisses it as "so-called gains." Yet, a serious debate about affirmative action must be based on much more than the rhetoric of victimization and certainly on more than Hall's discomfort with racial debates by the body politic.

As for the societal costs which Hall attributes to affirmative action, the answers do not require deep thought. Affirmative action did not invent societal divisiveness and racial intolerance, nor will it end it. Affirmative action did not repoliticize race (it had never been depoliticized), nor will it end such politicization. Affirmative action did not invent racial stigmas, nor will it end them.

Hall says that "affirmative action should ... return to its original purpose of monitoring inequalities and discriminatory practices that still exist." Monitoring? Then what? Keep a statistical record and issue an annual report along with crime statistics? It is likely that this "monitoring" would continue to reveal systemic discrimination throughout our society, some very serious and some not so consequential, some conscious and some not so conscious, some malevolent and some benign. Then what? Sit back and wait for this social ill to correct itself?

Read the critique of Affirmative Action by TESC Librarian and person of color Patrick Hall at www.olywip.org/20_years

Misperceptions of Affirmative Action

By Anne Phillips
June 1998

Affirmative Action has been alive and strong forever. However it did not have a name. White people have been hiring each other for years and years. White people hire their friends, family and neighbors. One example is universities' recruiting preferences for family of alumni. With the student body primarily being white, it will remain white. When the anti-Affirmative Action Initiative passed in California a few years ago enrollment of university students of color dropped 85%.

White people are living with benefits they are not aware of. The benefits are there every day. They are impossible to see until they are pointed out to you *and* you are willing to listen. For example, the average salary of an African-American female college graduate in a full time position is *less than* that of a white male high school drop out. Also, according to a 1995 government report, white males make up only 29% of the workforce, but they hold 95% of senior management positions. Affirmative Action is taking action to recognize all people and spread the white wealth.

Initiative 200 is wanting to end all "preferential treatment." "Preferential treatment" is a vague, broad term. If I-200 passed, someone in government power will interpret "preferential treatment." Preferential treatment could include numerous programs, including veterans benefits.

Racism abuses white people. Many white people do not know their cultural identities and do not practice their cultural traditions. Most European-Americans unconsciously merged to become "white" to be a stronger force. In turn, history was lost.

White people will gain by being a team player, they will gain by learning about themselves and others. I highly recommend that you read Paul Kivel's book, *Uprooting Racism*. It is vital we continue to become conscious of how racism is perpetuated.

Anti-racism workshop fails

By Wendy Ortiz - August 1997

This is an invitation to the women of color in Olympia to get together and build a community of resistance NOW. My thoughts were stirred up at the recent Foxfire Convention held in downtown Olympia over the July 4th weekend, most notably due to the workshop around the subject of racism. "Around racism" is actually the most appropriate term, because more often than not, the discussion was one that skirted the deeper issues of white supremacy and focused more on the racism we witness outside ourselves – what's reported by the media, how our peers or family or whomever have dealt with racism, what we've seen but not necessarily "felt" a part of.

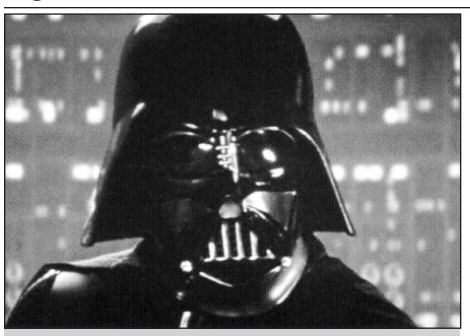
As I approached the space where the panel/discussion was to be held, my thoughts were these: Am I going to be the only woman of color to show up? The only woman of color from Olympia (as this was an event that drew women from largely west coast cities)?

My understanding of the panel discussion, as described in the Foxfire pamphlet, was that it would be as loosely a "panel" as possible; that white women against racism would be situated in one room and women of color in another, "not because we like segregation," as the pamphlet noted, but because it was understood that just as women need women-only space, women of color also need their own space in order to establish a safe and conducive atmosphere for open discussion. It was also noted that white women also needed to be able to talk about racism without having women of color "educate" them. I was hip to this, I thought, but then I got to the space, walked unknowingly into the wrong room, and BAM! I was hit with the import of this discussion. Granted, I walk into rooms every day where I am the single solitary woman, or person, of color – but to have the separation be so obvious in the midst of a women's convention was a little more unnerving than usual. A roomful of white women turned and looked at me, and I instantly turned around and made a beeline to someone outside the room whom I thought could tell me – where o where is the room full of women of color?

I found the correct room and my doubts were confirmed. Two other women of color were there, thankfully, but I was the only one from Olympia, let alone the state. Another woman did show up who lives in Olympia but informed us that she would be moving away at the end of the summer. We acknowledged that each of us had had the exact same fear (of being "the only one") and also acknowledged that this was probably not a common concern of the large group of women next door to us. After some time spent discussing our collective feeling of anger (that someone might have viewed us as the panel that would in fact "educate" them, or would possibly want to challenge or question our experiences, as has happened to each of us in the past, that this would possibly fuel our anger even more while not allowing us to find any amount of resolution, etc.), we entered the space of white women with a list of demands. These demands were 1) that we not be questioned or challenged about our experiences as women of color, 2) that we not be interrupted, and 3) that if one of us left the room in anger, that the discussion end completely so that everyone could stop and consider why a woman of color might have left the room.

As basic as these demands were, I could not help but feel that many white women could not comply for whatever reason because suddenly, many left the room under the guise of a spontaneous break, and never returned.

What followed was a three hour discussion about racism. I had somehow construed that this discussion would revolve around, or at least touch upon, white women's racism within the feminist movement, but this was not the focus. It was clear to me, then, that it was easier to focus on a more general, broad concept of racism as it applies to the world at large, than to focus on racism as it applied to you, me or she.



In 1999, right-wing activist and white-landowners advocate Tim Eyman (pictured above) came onto the scene with his successful Initiative 695, which limited all vehicle tabs to a flat rate of $30, thus cutting a huge chunk out of the state's transportation budget. Having helped curtail all those *special rights* enjoyed by the disabled, such as public transportation infrastructure funded with *his* hard-earned (and occasionally embezzled) tax dollars, Eyman went on to champion several more voter measures, some which have passed. His causes have included massive cuts in property taxes, attempted repealing of laws protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination, and mandates directing funding away from public transit and toward road construction.

Fighting for public transit: Initiative 695 spurs community action

By Jade
May 2000

At 10:00 am people started filtering into Sylvester Park in downtown Olympia. As the crowd swelled to several hundred, bus drivers who are being laid off spoke to an angry crowd. Over a hundred bus drivers have been laid off from Intercity Transit in Thurston Co. alone. This, along with the slashing of 42% of the routes serving the county and the elimination of all Sunday bus service, infuriated people to the point of action. At Noon, the crowd took to the street in an impromptu march to the capitol where the Transit Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee were discussing this very matter. As the march approached the capitol, activists from a hodge podge of groups sprang to action and erected two tripods blocking Capitol Way, the four lane road directly in front of the capitol dome.

This action was brought about as a response to Washington State's short-sighted mass transportation policy. In the eyes of the State and Federal Government, the term "mass transportation" means: new highways and more cars! According to the WA State Dept. of Highways, um, I mean, Dept. of Transportation (DOT) 1999-2001 budget, we already spend more than 10 times the amount of taxpayer dollars on highways as we do on our bus systems. The passage of initiative 695, which eliminated the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (a progressive tax on cars), resulted in the loss of 1.2 billion in revenue from the DOT budget. The Legislature's response has been to cut funding for the programs that have historically received the least amount of DOT funding, that being: buses, ferries and public rest areas and increase funding for highway construction! We feel that all of this is entirely unacceptable.

The Olympia community is responding with direct aciton of all kinds. In addition to the blockade of Capitol Way, local activists have started the Oly Free Bus. After the loss of all Sunday service from IT, the Free Bus is now the only public transit available on Sundays. We now have four volunteer drivers, covering a combination of scheduled routes and on-call service. One of our vehicles is a wheelchair lift equipped van, so the Free Bus is accessible to everyone. Relying entirely on donations, we have gotten an incredible amount of support from the community.

Equally incredible is the variety of stories we hear from our passengers. Some of our riders depend on us for a ride to the free dinner, some can't get to work without us, and some would just be stuck at home with no way to get out into the community.

The ADA - Will it succeed?

By Mary McKnew
October 1990

Fifteen years ago, the dean of students of my college informed me that, rather than continuing the unrealistic expectation that I could come back and complete my bachelor's degree, I should resign myself to living out my life in a nursing home. The previous year, I had been injured in a car accident and now use a wheelchair for mobility.

The dean's words were not prophetic. I transferred to another college and completed my degree. I haven't spent one night in a nursing home so far.

But this example of discrimination occurred many years ago, and this is a new day. On July 26, 1990, President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. The ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities by the private sector and state and local governments in employment practices, public accommodations and services.

Compliance deadlines vary for different provisions of the law. Thirty days after the bill is signed, public transit authorities must include wheelchair-life equipment on all orders for new vehicles. After thirty months, barrier-free code requirements apply to new construction. Two years following enactment, the law applies to employers with 25 or more employees. After four years, businesses with fifteen or more employees are affected.

It looks like discrimination against people with disabilities will become a relic of the past. The problem is solved.

Not quite, unfortunately. One reason for my pessimism is that my college-shopping experience occurred two years after passage of another important law for people with disabilities, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Rehab Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap by entities that receive federal financial assistance, which includes the vast majority of colleges and universities. Although already prohibited under the Rehab Act, the treatment I experienced from my college was not unusual.

Okay, but that was a long time ago, wasn't it? We've come a long way since then, haven't we?

Let's look around. During the mid-seventies, Washington State passed strong legislation addressing both barrier-free architectural standards and nondiscrimination in public accommodations. However, local code compliance staff appear to have overlooked (or looked the other way) during construction of the new Coupeville Inn (on Whidbey Island), where I stayed last month. One more new facility that does not meet the state's barrier-free standards and cannot be used by people with disabilities.

Surely, our progressive community is different, right? Unfortunately, not. In discussions with several Olympia residents with disabilities, there were mentioned several public facilities with spotty records on access. Check to see if your favorite hangout is among the following representative examples:

* An elevator was added to the much-celebrated Performing Arts Center only after local disabled people protested. Even with this improvement, the Center has no removable seats (to allow someone in a wheelchair an unobstructed view and to sit with her friends) on the balcony level.

* Gaining access to the state library reminds me of playing miniature golf. Wheelchair users determined to enter face the hazards of traveling through several parking lots around to the back of the building. They then enter through the mailroom (with its usual clutter that may drift out into the path of travel), and squeeze past an open stairwell before reaching the safety of the research desk.

* On the other hand, the new "Detroit's" is fully accessible to someone in a wheelchair, if you want to sit off by yourself and not dance. Most people, however, seem to prefer going down the steps to the main area.

Some city agencies demonstrate schizophrenia in providing access for people with disabilities. Intercity Transit offers 100% access on its fixed-route bus service (all buses are lift-equipped). However, its para-transit (door-to-door service) operates on an abbreviated schedule and service area. In addition, the passenger's trip purpose is a factor in determining if he will be served at all; a medical visit may be considered a higher priority and bump someone who needs to go shopping. All of this might seem justified if the service is swamped with requests. So far, however, Intercity staff have been unable (or unwilling) to release information on how many people request para-transit service that are not served.

But in all of these examples access must be provided by modifying an existing structure or making sure a new facility is constructed to be barrier-free. In contrast, the antique market at Carnegie's has chosen to lock its wheelchair-accessible entrance (using it as a storage area) and send would-be customers up (and then down again) twenty or so steps to enter. It's hard to believe that this was inadvertent.

Many business owners and local agencies do comply with access laws. A few even go beyond the legal requirements. The Olympia Co-op, in a rather dated facility, recently renovated its bathroom to provide wheelchair access. The City of Olympia's capital budget includes funds to retrofit forty or so curbs each year to facilitate travel by wheelchair users.

For disabled people, the Americans with Disabilities Act signals a new era of social justice. Let's make sure this new era is different than the others.

Photo from the Olympia Free Bus - Photo by Tristan Baurick

Putting the person first

By Carol Simila-Dickinson
September 1995

Just as putting a title in front of their name tends to elevate people into a power position, using disability labels tends to demote people into a weaker position. Unless you are preparing a person for surgery or therapy, there usually is no need to refer to them by their disability. It is not a person's disabilities that gets them through the day and enables them to defy the odds, but rather their strengths.

When we glorify a person with a disability for accomplishing something ordinary, we accentuate their disability. Of course, we mean it in a very positive way. But the result is an illusion that people with disabilities are heroes instead of ordinary people with drive and interests. All people should be recognized for their accomplishments. If it comes as a shock when a person with disabilities makes the grade, it only shows how thoroughly we have become accustomed to excluding them.

Sweatshops for the disabled

By David Griffiths
January 2001

That's right - sweatshops specifically created to exploit disabled workers - and they're 100% legal under U.S. law. Let's examine how this works. The owner of such a workshop, usually a non-profit "service" organization or agency, applies to the U.S. Department of Labor for a special certificate. This certificate allows the employer to pay their workers below the federal minimum wage. Each individual worker's wage is calculated based on that worker's "percentage of disability," applied to the prevailing wage in the region for the type of work being done. In English, this means that if a non-disabled worker earns $10 an hour, making 100 widgets, a disabled worker who only makes 43 widgets in an hour only gets paid $4.30 an hour, regardless of working conditions, the difficulty of the work, and federal and state minimum wage laws.

Doesn't the ADA guarantee freedom from discrimination, and equal rights in the workplace? Doesn't this mean that disabled workers have to be paid the minimum wage? In short, not really.

There are several reasons for this. First and foremost is a clause tucked away in the very back, so to speak, in one of the final sections of the last title of the ADA, the one entitled "Miscellaneous." This clause reads, "Nothing in this act shall be construed in any manner that conflicts with existing federal legislation." This clause has been tested in litigation, and has been interpreted to mean that if you put the ADA up against any other federal law, the ADA will lose every time. In turn, this means that the elaborate system of exemptions, certificates and separate piece-rate pay scales for disabled workers is not considered a form of discrimination by the federal government.

Not only does the ADA not prohibit such exploitation, but the law contains provisions that grant tax credits to employers who make accomodations for disabled workers or customers. So now it's possible to hire a large number of workers who won't speak up for themselves or cause any problems, pay them obscenely low wages, write off a chunk of your taxes, and get big brownie points for hiring the disabled.

When asked why such exploitation is tolerated, self-proclaimed "advocates for the rights of the disabled" will cheerfully remind you that almost without exception "these people" all receive Social Security benefits. A person who receives SSI is only allowed to make $85 a month, before the government starts cutting back their payment. If someone earns too much, they might lose their Medicaid benefits. So, apparently, in the minds of "our" advocates, the key to the best possible quality of life is a combination of slave wage sweatshop labor and forced dependence on inadequately funded government agencies.

Gay-bashing in Olympia

By Anna Schlecht
March 1993

As the phone calls went out, a shockwave set in. I, like many people, was stunned to hear of a gay-bashing, or a violent act of hate that targeted a gay person here in Thurston County. Homophobia – the fear and hatred of Gays/Lesbians/Bisexuals/Transgender People – has been whipped to a fevered pitch with the national attention given to the debate over the military's ban, and the regional campaign of anti-gay hate waged by the Oregon Citizen's Alliance and its evil twin, the Citizen's Alliance of Washington. And as part of a frightening trend that has afflicted the entire country, we find that this national level debate was made local through a brutal attack.

This incident occurred in the parking lot of the Evergreen Ballroom, which is a dance bar way out on Pacific Avenue past Lacey. In the early hours of February 6th, two men were walking into the bar from the parking lot. One put his hand on the other's shoulder and said "Let's have a good time tonight." One man was gay, one man was straight. Apparently that simple gesture, viewed against the backdrop of the media's inflamed portrayal of the supposed crisis of Gays in the military proved to be too much for two other men. Apparently intoxicated, they yelled out "Hey, what are you two F------ doing?" Suddenly, one of the targeted men felt an incredible blow to the forehead, fell to the ground, and went in and out of consciousness as he was beaten, kicked in the stomach and dragged around the parking lot. At one point, he regained consciousness and saw his friend also being beaten. He came to approximately 200 feet from where they had been jumped. His head was bleeding profusely, to the point that his clothing was soaked.

At that point, the less injured of the two went into the bar to seek help. Despite repeated requests by this injured man, apparently the employees did not call 911 to request medical assistance. Eventually a friend came and transported them to the hospital in a private car, an extremely risky endeavor given that one of the people had a potentially serious head injury that was bleeding profusely. At the hospital, it took 22 stitches to close his head wound. The Thurston County Sheriff's Department is investigating the incident, looking for the two assailants who are still at large, and will determine whether or not 911 was called.

Denying racism

By Ron Jacobs
February 1992

In early January, an African-American man was attacked by a group of White youths wielding an aluminum baseball bat as he crossed the railroad tracks approximately 200 feet from the eastern end of the tunnel. As the attackers jumped him, they yelled "nigger" and a variety of other racist epithets. At first, local papers quoted police statements which labeled the incident "racial." Within days, however, the police backed off from their statements.

A similar scenario occurred in Seattle where another African-American man was attacked by a group of White youths after he stepped off a bus. The young men had been singing racist songs on the bus and, when he disembarked, so did they. Later, a young White man from the Olympia-Lacey area was arrested on charges stemming from that attack. Once again, police first labeled the attack racial, and then backed off.

I mention the above (by no means the only racist activity in the area), and the police reaction to illustrate a couple things. One is the fact that no place, even Olympia, is immune from the upsurge in racism sweeping the planet. The other is, not the failure of the police, but the ambiguity of the law regarding what constitutes a "racial" attack. In a society which has depended on racism to get where it is, it should not be surprising that an attack on a Black man by a group of Whites yelling "nigger," could be painted as non-racial.

Rise in violent attacks on immigrants

By Joshua Neuhouser
July 2009

Hate crimes against Latinos have risen by nearly half in the past five years, but what is important is not just the increase in racism and xenophobia (which is distressingly predictable during an economic crisis), but how the authorities respond. The murderers of the Minuteman American Defense will likely receive the fullest punishment available under the law, but this has more to do with the fact that a nine-year-old girl was murdered than that it was a hate crime. To compare, a father of three named Luis Ramirez was beaten to death by six white teenagers in a small Pennsylvania town last summer. The attackers told his girlfriend, "You fucking bitch, tell your fucking Mexican friends get the fuck out of Shenandoah or you're gonna be laying fucking next to him."

When police arrived on the scene, they decided that pursuing the attackers was "not a priority," choosing to search the friends of the deceased instead. This year an all-white jury decided that the murder was not a hate crime, and the defendants were sentenced to six months. And this May in Mount Vernon, Ohio, a 17 year old boy named Robert Cantu was confronted by a gang of whites, yelling "Get the Mexican!" They put a noose around his neck, dragged him across a parking lot and threatened to hang him when Cantu's friends intervened and saved his life.

His attackers received ten days in jail. The message is clear: If you kill or threaten to kill Latinos, you will receive only the slightest slap on the wrist. Which makes sense, seeing as how privatized prisons have made such a big business out of locking up Latinos, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement has committed to quotas of 1,000 arrests per team. To punish hate crimes in a harsher manner might suggest that immigrants might be human, and that making money off of their incarceration might be immoral.

The Olympia community turned out in droves to oppose a visit by the neo-nazis of the National Socialist Movement - Photo by Sandy Mayes, April 2006

I wouldn't be surprised if a lot of the "hate crimes" - in fact, I know *a lot of the "hate crimes" - are perpetrated by the homosexual community as a media tool.*

-Lon Mabon, Oregon Citizens Alliance

An example of everyday racism

By Tiokasin Veaux
December 1994

I have a four year-old daughter, Wichapi Mani, who rides the public transit with me from time to time. One day we boarded the bus, politely saying our "hellos" to the bus driver and to four elderly white ladies, who commented on how happy my little girl seemed and that I must be teaching her good values. I then thanked them for their compliments and took a seat behind the ladies, as they made Mani curious. After a few minutes, the bus driver came to a stop light. After the light turned green, he entered the intersection only to come to a screeching halt, narrowly missing a speeding car. The sudden stop jolted the riders into catching themselves or picking themselves up off the aisle floor. The bus driver then made sure that everyone was not injured, especially the elderly ladies, who then began joking with the driver about "not riding the bus when he drives ever again" or "that certainly was a wake-up call." But the one comment, that my daughter seemed to remember, was "Don't ever let us catch you driving like a 'wild Indian' again."

I will always remember those smiling faces who compliment us in one breath, and then in the next gave to my daughter an image of who she was as a Lakota, as an Indian. Her question in response was "Ate? Aren't we Indians? What's a 'wild Indian'?"

Initiating a community-wide response to hate crimes

By Robin Jennings
May 1998

A weekend in mid-April, my family and I were hiking in the Capitol Forest on the public access road when we came across the gate at D-4000. It is the access gate for the relay transmitters on Capitol Peak. It was locked. On it were spray painted words that offended us.

My daughter asked what the meaning of the words was. She was upset to see such racial epithets. It was appalling to see such hateful words.

Yes, even in the little town of Olympia, this could happen.

I, like other parents in this community, want a safe and happy environment for our children to grow up in. Many express a desire for this in Olympia also, but are taking an apathetic or complacent stance. I, as a parent and moral individual, could not just stand by and slough off these actions as "Punks will be Punks."

Yes, the responses to this event are varied. Some are asking how this can exist in this community. From a murder of an Asian-American boy in a downtown tunnel to spray painted hate graffiti on public access roads in a natural setting, each attack is hurtful. Not only is it damaging to individual groups, but hurtful to our children's quality of life here in Olympia. The offenses might be subtle or overt, but they do exist in Thurston County. Unfortunately so, it means we have to confront such attitudes.

What each of us as individuals need to assess is what our role as players are regarding this ignorance. The ultimate victims of this are the community. As members of this society, each one need to be compelled to address this issue, talk about it amongst ourselves, and command responsibility and accountability from political, governmental and community agencies to respond.

It must be understood that HATE CRIMES will not be tolerated in this community. PERIOD.

City Council passes hate crime law

By Anna Schlecht
October 1993

A new Anti-Harassment Ordinance, which is in effect an Anti-Hate Crimes law, was passed unanimously by the Olympia City Council on September 14th, in spite of opposition. It had been over a year since Council Member Mark Foutch introduced the idea, during which time Robert Buchanan Jr., and Asian-American youth, was brutally murdered by neo-Nazis in downtown Olympia, underscoring the need for such a law. This new law will strengthen legal protections against harassment and hate crimes which target people on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, or sensory handicaps. The category of political affiliations was dropped after some debate, but will be reconsidered at a later date. Essentially, this law provides sentencing enhancement for crimes that target a victim due to their race, color, religion, etc, by allowing a greater penalty to be imposed by the court when a motive or intent of hate towards any of the above listed groups can be proven. This approach has been recently upheld by the Supreme Court, and City staff believes it will be able to withstand the constitutional challenges which have struck down other hate crime laws.

The ordinance had been opposed by Religious Right activists, including the Thurston County Alliance, which, despite statements to the contrary, is the local franchise of the Citizen's Alliance of Washington. They employed a strategy of attacking the entire ordinance, which protects many targeted groups, by attempting to portray it as trick of "the Militant Homosexual Agenda" to gain "special rights" for bi-sexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people, presumably at the expense of equal protection under the law.

During informal debate outside a prehearing Council Committee meeting, the opposition cited this ordinance as discriminatory towards people victimized by crime in that it awarded "special rights" to limited groups of people. They continued to elaborate on their "special rights" analysis of the broader "gay agenda", and cited examples of such offenses as: "militant homosexuals" allegedly trying to lower the age of consent (for sexual relations between adults and minors) as a means of attacking their children; "militant homosexuals" forcing state workers to be subjected to mandatory diversity training that they felt violated their right to religious convictions against gay rights; and the fact that if the hate crime law passed, "militant homosexuals" would rake in exorbitant court settlements on fraudulent hate crime charges, at the expense of tax payers. As is often the case, this analysis quickly lapsed into bible verses and condemnation of bi-sexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people as sinful. In spite of the gender and orientation diversity of supporters at this meeting, the religious right characterized the supporters as all being "militant lesbians."

An injury to one: On Wal-Mart and the UFCW

By R Jay Hershey
July 2003

Once upon a time in Washington State, an injury to one union injured all union members. In downtown Olympia, the Crane Cafe, The Spar, Ben Moore's, the China Clipper, the Olympia Oyster House, the Olympia Hotel, the Governor House, and dozens of other taverns and restaurants proudly displayed the little sign with the antique lettering which swept up from the left, "This is a Union House!"

Union members stuck together back then. The times of mobs storming and sacking union halls, egged on by the business community and backed by lumber barons, still had a galvanizing effect on the rank-and-file. They remembered the pick handles upside their heads, the tarrings and featherings, the lynchings. So loggers, millwrights, carpenters, brewers, bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, phone company employees, longshoremen, and other union members would have stayed away from a non-union joint until such time as it would have gone union. An injury to one injured all.

Herbert Hoover once told a visiting delegate, "We have forty-seven states and The People's Republic of Washington." By that bit of sarcasm, he meant that our state had unionized almost completely - a proposition he did not like. Growing up here, I remember that J.C. Penney's, Miller's (a department store across from Penney's on Capitol Way), Sears and Roebucks, Mottman's (another department store on Capitol Way) and Montgomery Ward's all ran union shops. If they hadn't, my dad, a union carpenter, would never have darkened their doorways.

About the time I had turned six, Safeway opened a unionized store downtown, and soon after, Ralph Storman built his first Thriftway on a cow pasture between Fourth and State streets on the East side. It, too, went union. Now the supermarkets in our area represent the last bastion against slave wages in the over-the-counter sales business in our area. Sears, Penney's, Ross, and the rest lie busted.

Forty years ago, union membership guaranteed a hundred percent medical coverage for most workers. I remember paying for a prescription with a dollar and my union card. We achieved that by sticking together. We even made one of our business agents trade in his brand-new Volkswagen on a new Chevy. Yes, Volkswagen had organized, but their union workers didn't live in America; an injury to one - even to the United Auto Workers clear over in Detroit, three time zones distant - injured us all.

On Wednesday, the 28th of May, *The Olympian* ran a front-page story on how Wal-Mart intends to sneak into the south end of Lacey with a "Supercenter" which will sell groceries and will employ only scabs. The scabs will get a few cents more than minimum wage. Wal-Mart will offer much lower prices at first, which will result in the closing of at least one of the two union supermarkets on College Street a quarter-mile away. Since the surviving market will have to lay off store clerks, the number of good jobs lost could reach a hundred or more; when I talked to Ruth Underwood of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) local 367, she estimated the job toll at around 150 jobs. "Neighborhood small businesses close when Wal-Mart opens a store. Aberdeen was thriving downtown until Wal-Mart came in, and the small businesses which had supported families forever padlocked their doors." So much for Wal-Mart 'family values.'

I find it interesting that the employees have to pay for the optional health insurance out of their scab wages. The Walton Foundation, which Wal-Mart funds, endows enough ultraconservative politically active groups around the country to pay outright all of their employee health-care costs and still have enough left over for a robust pension plan. In our state, for example, they bankroll the Evergreen Freedom Foundation, which insidiously attacks - wouldn't you know it - labor laws and labor unions. In particular, they have gone after the Washington Education Association, our foremost stalwart against the advent of voucher-scab schools. Evergreen Freedom Foundation also fights against Washington's prevailing wage law, which forces contractors to pay union scale on state projects. Apparently, the Evergreen Freedom Foundation wants the freedom to jackhammer the economic foundation of the middle class, thereby setting up a two-tier caste system. (Guess who gets the untouchable end of the stick?)

If we stand up to Wal-Mart, we can stop them. Gig Harbor did. We can, too. When we "just say no" to the drug of low prices at the expense of our neighbor's happiness, we will win. We should garner our resistance. In such a happy happenstance our little corner of the world will have staved off melancholy and even pushed it back somewhat. An injury to one...

Temporary state labor undermines state unions

By Zach Zinn
June 2002

Naturally, I was delighted when I got a job with the State of Washington only a month after being here. One catch: I'm a "temp." The quotation marks are appropriate because I do the exact same job as the official state employees, but I get paid about half the wage they do, and I earn no benefits whatsoever. This is also the process many state employees must go through to become permanent. You might be saying, "What's wrong with that? As long as everyone has to go through that, well then it must be fair." If only it were so simple.

The most glaring inequity upon first being a part of this system is that the period of time spent as a temp is indefinite. I am not a "state temp," which is a worker actually hired by the state; we are technically hired by a private company contracted by the state in order to get around using state temps, who are given some rights, benefits, and also have some provisions as to how much time may pass before the state "officially" hires them. Some have waited three months for a permanent job, some have waited years. At this point, it appears the state in general is attempting to slowly dwindle its pool of official employees, and replace them with temps. The hiring freeze and budgetary scare tactics are aiding in this.

The point of my sob story? This is happening everywhere. It's good for business, good for profits, good for a system which seems to have discarded even the pretensions of valuing the dignity and security of workers.

Heath Flores, owner of the downtown Pizza Time, converses with striking Pizza Time workers - Photo by Wally Cuddeford, August 2005

The fight for an agricultural workers union

By Sheila Payne
September 1991

Agricultural workers were the only classification of workers denied collective bargaining rights when the New Deal laws were enacted in the 30's. This is a wrong that all unions need to address. To the farm workers, collective bargaining is not some abstract term signifying power struggles between management and workers. There are no laws mandating that farm workers have a right to be represented by a union of their choice, meaning no job security, and no grievance process to address unsafe and unsanitary working conditions. Farm workers have the highest accident rate of all jobs, and are exposed to pesticides which the growers are under no obligation to identify for the workers. They are at the mercy of the growers and the labor contractors when they subvert L&I laws for their own benefit.

When one sector of the working class is exploited and under-represented it affects all working people. "An injury to one is an injury to all" is not just a cute brotherly phrase. It reflects the chain reaction of under-employed, underpaid workers with no voice that want your job, undermining any solidarity between workers. As active union membership declines in this country, and respect for all workers' clout diminishes, businesses assume all of the power.

The latest labor dispute at [winery] Chateau Ste Michelle was triggered by the firing of 10 farm workers registering written complaints about an arbitrary reduction in benefits/wages, and worsening work conditions. CSM continues to discriminate against women, hiring them for shorter periods of time so that they cannot qualify for any benefits. 45 of 55 farm workers requested representation by UFWWS, more workers were fired, and many more were discriminated against by a reduction in hours and other harassment because of their union activities. The Union is charging CSM with violating the Migrant Seasonal Worker Protection Act and the state laws governing the right to organize. In response, CSM hired an anti-union consultant from California, and tripled the labor force to shorten the work season.

It is important to keep pressure on the wineries, but the ultimate goal is to amend labor laws to guarantee farm workers the right to union representation. This year, the house passed an agricultural bargaining bill. Because of heavy lobbying from members of the Senate who are also growers, a similar Senate bill never made it to the floor. Next year HB961 will be introduced which will seek to maintain an independent labor relations board, utilize binding arbitration, maintain secondary boycott rights, and seek a pesticide phase-out schedule. If this bill fails to pass, then an initiative will go to the people on the Nov. 1992 ballot.

Kaiser Aluminum

By Teresa Jennings
December 1998

MAXXAM Inc. [parent company of Kaiser Aluminum] is controlled by Charles Hurwitz, a Houston, Texas industrialist who also owns a large tract of northern California redwood timber holdings. These holdings in northern California are the ones currently undergoing clearcutting. Mr. Hurwitz is after the fast buck and the quick dollar. His actions on more than one front indicate a lack of scruples.

The 320 unionized workers at the Tacoma [Kaiser] plant have a long 50-year history of working through the difficulties and downturns in the economy. The workers there are the grandsons and granddaughters of the union members who fought hard to bring and maintain unionization at the Kaiser plant. In 1983, company officials came to the union and asked for a special deal. Kaiser Aluminum was in trouble—a crisis in the aluminum industry was eroding the company's profitability, and things were looking grim.

The union responded because in those days "loyalty at Kaiser was a two-way street." Kaiser Aluminum had stood by its workers and the union was prepared to stand by the company. The union released the company from the obligations under the USWA's coordinated agreements with the "Big 3" (Alcoa, Reynolds, and Kaiser). It was understood by everyone that when profits returned, union standards would be restored. Kaiser received wage and benefit concessions worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Long term, interest free loans were given to Kaiser as workers accepted preferred stock in replacement of a proportion of their wages.

Now, the company is in a better position than ever to keep its word—to pay union members back for their past sacrifices. Unfortunately, Kaiser is not the same company it was in 1983. It has forgotten about the principles of its founder—and about the promises it made fifteen years ago.

Local postal organizer fired

From WIP News Service
January 2009

Longtime local labor and media activist, Clint Burelson, has for a second time been fired from his position at the Postal Service for executing his duties as an American Postal Workers Union representative. Burelson is the president of the APWU Olympia local and has a long record of fierce advocacy, not only in defense of workers rights at the Postal Service, but also on behalf of all of us as citizens of a democracy who depend on the US Postal Service as a means of sharing information.

Early in 2006, Burelson began a campaign to publicize and resist a USPS plan to consolidate operations nationwide in a manner which would transfer good union Postal Service jobs to private corporations paying minimum wage, and essentially subsidize services to large corporate mailers like AOL/Time Warner, while reducing service and increasing costs for the rest of us.

Burelson did the research, wrote the press releases, and organized the pickets, which eventually fueled a nationwide resistance to consolidation plans. The USPS rationale for consolidation was cost savings, but Burelson and others argued at the outset and now present evidence demonstrating that the plan has in fact increased operation costs.

Despite the efforts of Burelson, his coworkers, and local citizens to prevent consolidation here in Olympia, processing of outgoing mail was transferred to Tacoma in Sept. 2006. Olympia no longer has its own postmark.

But the movement Burelson spearheaded in 2006 eventually forced the USPS to put consolidations on hold nationally. Of the 147 facilities initially targeted for consolidation, only four have been implemented. And the struggle continues locally as postal workers fight to bring Burelson back to work and to bring mail processing operations back on line here in Olympia.

Looking forward to 2010

By Regina Costa
April 1991

What is Washington going to be like in the future? How can we ensure that our way of life does not destroy the complex ecological systems that support life itself?

People are flocking to settle in Western Washington. This, in turn, has led to increased development. Forests and wetlands are being paved. Subdivisions are being built on toxic waste sites. A state agency was caught dumping hazardous materials near McAllister Springs, the main source of water for this region.

Eastern Washington faces a different set of problems. Hanford's bounty will be reaped for generations. A combination of ill-conceived irrigation techniques and massive hydro-electric dams on the mighty Columbia River have rendered salmon an endangered species, an almost inconceivable thought.

It is clear that some long term thinking is required to address the problems caused by the way we are living in this region. Last year, the state's Department of Ecology launched an ambitious project to explore the question of what Washington State would be like in the year 2010. During the course of the project, it became apparent that some sort of practical application of the ideas arising from the 2010 study would be necessary if the ideas were to make the big move from paper to reality. Thus, it was that the Department of Ecology invited the city of Olympia to become a model city, to study the problems and work out solutions to help define how urban Americans can live in balance with the land. Olympia is to become a sustainable city.

What is a sustainable city? Jim McGrath set forth a list of characteristics in an article entitled Green Cities: Partners in a Sustainable Bioregion, as summarized in a leaflet issued by Olympia's Earth Day Committee. "People live, shop and work in their neighborhoods. Most travel is by foot or bicycle with bus and rail connecting these integrated neighborhoods. High density, mixed use buildings reduce sprawl and auto travel. Neighborhoods serve as cultural and political centers. Communal spaces abound, such as plazas, outdoor cafes and markets, community gardens and greenbelts. There is lots of greenery in backyard, rooftop and streetside gardens. Creeks and wildlife habitat are threaded through town. The community is more self-reliant in food or energy: people eat locally grown food, use more energy from renewable resources, conserve and recycle what they use. People are involved in governing their neighborhoods, restoring habitat, teaching children about their environment, caring for each other, and participating in local art and culture."

Forest defenders on Rocky Brook Rd. in Dosewallips - Photo by hali panneton, Feb 1996

A personal account from forest defense activism

By hali panneton
March 1996

Wednesday, 2-14 – Early morning, all-night Freddie patrols at both roadblocks were greeted with the disclosure that 12 forest defenders were now treesitting within the cutting area, that they (the Forest Service) were responsible for their safety, and must, therefore, stop the chainsaws. The freddies and county cops attempted to receive this latest gem with composure, but within moments radios and phones started to ring in numerous vehicles in unison, and the "authorities" were obviously ruffled. Within hours, all major Seattle TV news agencies arrived on the scene, some flying over the cutting area in helicopters, then driving with Forest Service officials into the Rocky sale, and interviewing/filming forest defenders on their way out. The media blitz was sparked in large part by Ben White, who was perched 100 feet up in a cedar tree while conversing with news departments via cellular phone.

Shane, one of the women arrested Tuesday on the south road, was again arrested on Wednesday at the north road, allegedly for disregarding an admonition to steer clear of Rocky Brook Road as a condition of her release. Clearly an attempt to discourage protesters and remove this influential and stalwart individual from the rest of the group, this arrest was nearly as flimsy and controversial as those that occurred on Tuesday.

Unbelievably, the Forest Service refused to halt the clearcutting, going as far as to threaten a defender at the south road (yours truly) with an obstructing justice citation unless she informed the freddies of the treesitters' exact locations. I retorted that the U.S. Forest Service, and not myself, was responsible if anyone was injured, and that their continued cutting was downright unconscionable.

By Jeff Sowers
August 2000

Last, and definitely least, is I-745, another Tim Eyman initiative. It would require that 90 percent of all transportation funds go to roads, thereby reducing money for mass-transit and pedestrian projects. According to the NO I-745 website, "The 90% provision of I-745 represents a 12% increase for roads, which isn't much. At the same time, it represents a huge 50% cut in all the other programs." Obviously, this initiative could be devastating to public transportation. On the bright side, a poll commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund found that 61% of the U.S. population supports shifting money away from building public highways to building public transportation systems such as new bus routes and commuter rail. Let's hope this, and an informed, vocal opposition, translates into a resounding defeat for I-745.

Bio-Centrism

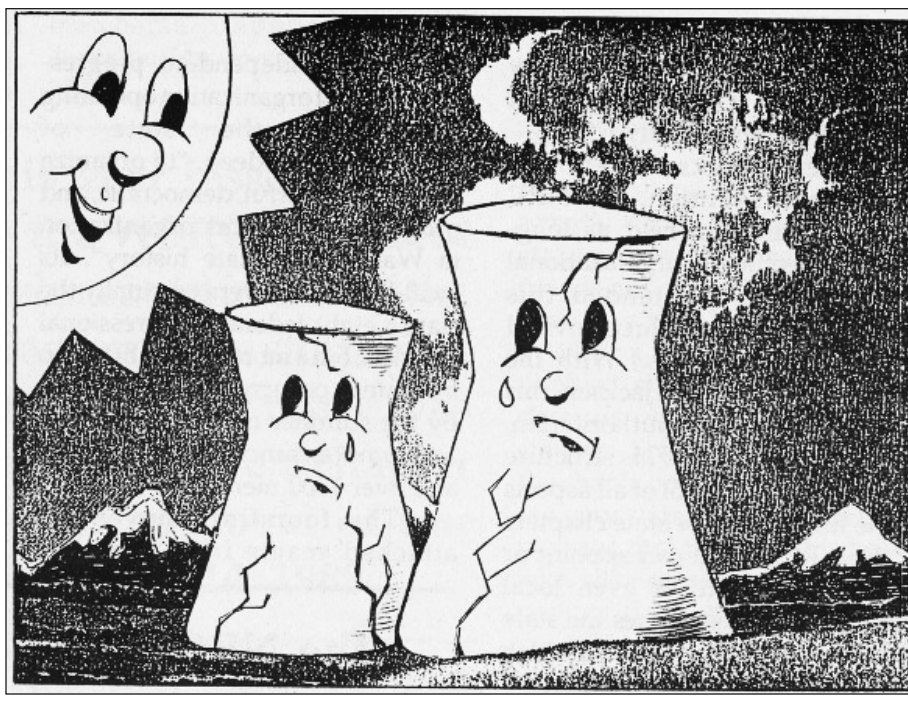
Living in harmony with our environment

By Grace Brookman
February 1995

Perhaps [the New World settlers'] failure to embrace a more bio-centric life was due to patriarchal social control and christianity or to a fear that unburdened itself through an attempt to control the unknown. Maybe it was greed or a refined taste for the world's "highest standard of living." For all I know, perhaps it was just an experiment to see what would happen when they unraveled the web of life and dismantled the food chain.

Whatever the explanation, the intensity of the world-wide environmental crisis makes it so that we can no longer accept such a disconnected and usually violently imposed belief system. Enough is enough. In our search for social justice, it's time to add in those who cannot speak: the animals, the birds, the fish and the trees. It's our environmental legacy that threatens all life, not just theirs. In a time of mass extinctions, to dismiss the existence and protection of any other creature should be unthinkable, whether that creature makes us happy or not.

I don't believe that the movements for social justice and the movements of revolutionary ecology and bio-centric environmental activism are that far apart. Together, we pose a formidable threat to a lifeless system of corporate greed. If we choose to learn from one another we may yet share a common vision of a world that practices justice for all.



From the September 1990 WIP - Graphic by Matt Love

Opposition to the Satsop Nuclear Plant

By Regina Costa
September 1990

The timing was exquisite. One week after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, 400 people came out in 95 degree heat to party in the parking lot of the unfinished nuclear power plant near Elma. Greenpeace billed it as a WPPSS termination party, a response to the Northwest Power and Planning Council decision last May to place two uncompleted WPPSS nuclear power stations (1 and 3) on a list for "active consideration as new power sources for the region." The party turned into a preemptive strike against the inevitable argument that we should substitute dependence on nuclear power for dependence on foreign oil. They came, not merely to bury WPPSS, but to propose an alternative approach to meet people's need for energy.

State Representative Dick Nelson, chair of the House Energy and Utilities Committee, stressed the need to debunk the "myth of technology," which promotes the use of chemicals to give us designer vegetables, large bombs and other weapons to settle disputes among peoples and mammoth nuclear power stations to provide energy. Nelson argued that "...The nuclear myth, as do other technological myths, ignores human-size solutions." Human-size means of producing power were on display in the parking lot, where information on innovative solar and wind options was provided by vendors and Olympia's Energy Outreach Center.

Bob Coe, of Oregon's Salem Electric co-operative, argued that "...Conservation in the last decade has too often been trivialized into marketing schemes and public relations gestures."

There is a growing public demand for human-size methods of producing what humans need to live that do not create hazardous toxic substances or harm the environment. If this were not the case, then none of the Northwest rebel ratepayer PUD commissioners would have been elected (they put forth their views on these issues when they ran for office), George Bush would not have bowed to public pressure and put the shores of Washington, Oregon, California and part of Florida off-limits to oil barons (albeit temporarily) and the Green Party would not hold seats in the European Parliament.

The desire of people for production on a human scale is evident in the growth of cottage industries and the flourishing of farmers markets. As pointed out by speakers at Elma, the demand for human-size energy options can also create jobs and economic opportunities for our region – without creating the kinds of horrible messes that have been bestowed on Hanford, Prince William Sound, and Chernobyl.

The FDA approves bovine growth hormone

By Zachary D. Lyons
December 1993

On November 5, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announced it had approved the Monsanto company's version of genetically engineered Bovine Growth Hormone (BGH). BGH has been hailed by the chemical companies which developed it as a way to increase milk production in cows as much as 25%. But BGH has been assailed by the Pure Food Campaign of the Foundation on Economic Trends and others as an attack by the chemical companies, mega-dairy conglomerates and some federal government agencies on small family farms, pure food and the cows expected to produce the extra milk, at a time when the U.S. dairy industry continues to produce surplus milk without BGH.

A call to arms of sorts has been sent out by BGH opponents, who wish to take advantage of the 90-day moratorium on the use of BGH. The moratorium, added by Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin to the Budget Reconciliation Act which passed in August, prevents the sale or use of BGH for 90 days from the date of FDA approval.

The intent of the moratorium is to allow BGH opponents the opportunity to organize against BGH before it actually reaches the marketplace.

The major prong of the assault on BGH is the BGH boycott. The Pure Food Campaign has been promoting it, and the CED has been listing it for years. The concept is simple: don't buy dairy products from dairy producers who accept milk from dairy farms that use BGH.

There's only one problem. When the FDA approved BGH, they refused to require that products from BGH-injected herds be labeled. So it is hard to know which products are affected by BGH, and which are not. The Pure Food Campaign therefore suggests that consumers, grocery stores and restaurants assume that all dairy products are from BGH herds unless they are labeled otherwise.

Opponents of BGH have found that, without FDA required labels alerting consumers to dairy products produced using BGH, the only way to actually boycott those products effectively is to label dairy products which are BGH-free. Then activists can simply ask consumers to *buycott* BGH-free labeled products, boycott unlabeled dairy products and force dairy producers to have to choose between customers and BGH that way.

Wal-Mart expose

From WIP News Service
January 1996

The Wal-Mart edge rests on reducing labor costs at home and buying products off-shore where they are produced more cheaply. Low operating costs allow Wal-Mart to discount its prices, while maintaining a high profit ratio, which keeps pressure on the competition.

As Wal-Mart builds into an area, it moves from a pattern of many smaller stores to supercenters. The smaller stores are the first wave used to capture a beachhead in an area-wide market that a supercenter can exploit. Wal-Mart started here in Omak, Yakima, Shelton, and Kennewick. They have twelve stores presently, and given the size of our state, the Wal-Mart buildup could equal as many as fifty stores. In Olympia, they are trying to buy Candlewood Manor out from under the 120 low/fixed-income trailer residents who currently live there.

Wal-Mart promotes itself as a retailer who "Buys American." Several years ago, a television news magazine discovered that Wal-Mart routinely puts labels indicating that an item was made in the US on imported products. Further investigation revealed that the products labeled "Made in America" were produced in factories employing children. On a trip to the Wal-Mart store in Aberdeen, an investigator inventoried the merchandise displayed for the product's country of origin. The products were found to have been manufactured in Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Pakistan, El Salvador, Bahrain, Belize, Taiwan and the Dominican Republic. Twenty items were checked before one was found with a "Made in the USA" label. The "Made in the USA" label covered another label which read "imported by Wal-Mart, Bentonville, Arkansas." A label check in both the Aberdeen and Chehalis Wal-Marts did not turn up a single Washington state label.

China, a favorite Wal-Mart trading partner, enjoys the US's "Most Favored Nation" status and is the world's largest seller of contract labor. Wal-Mart owns fourteen brands of shoes and boots which are actually produced in China. By 1990, Wal-Mart was importing over four million pounds of these shoes a year. Since 1985, 234 American shoe plants have been closed; over 28,000 jobs in the shoe industry have been lost.

Health care for profit

By Laura McClure
May 1999

Our piecemeal, for-profit healthcare system is sick, and everyone knows it. And yet, almost no one is pushing for the real cure. The current fashion is incremental reforms. Last year, for instance, Congress passed a new program to finance healthcare for some uninsured children. Now the Democrats and Republicans are pushing competing versions of bills to make it harder for HMOs to deprive people of needed care.

Fine. But none of these reforms address the underlying problem: a healthcare system that is driven by giant insurance conglomerates, supplemented by an inadequate patchwork of public programs that segments the population into unequal fragments, rich and poor, healthy and sick, young and old, employed and unemployed. There's no real solution short of creating one unitary publicly funded system that treats everyone the same - that is, fabulously. And remarkably, the experience of other countries tells us this kind of system would actually be cheaper than the sick one we have now. Four years ago, there was a movement to win this kind of healthcare system, called single-payer. That movement was undermined in part by President Clinton, who, instead of pressing for the simple, single-payer plan, came up with a reform plan that added even more bureaucracy to the system without addressing the system's most fundamental flaws.

Do we really have to resign ourselves to patching up a system that is among the least effective and most expensive in the industrialized world?

Philip Morris extorts Olympia over brewery

From WIP News Service
February 2001

This community is under corporate siege, but you may not be aware of it yet. In 1999 the Miller Brewing Company ($4.1 billion in sales in 1998), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Philip Morris Companies, Inc. ($78.6 billion in revenues in 1999; the 27th largest corporation in the world by revenues), purchased the tiny Tumwater brewery. The president of Miller stated in a press release: "Miller is committed to the communities in which we do business, and we look forward to playing an active role in Tumwater and the surrounding area." In less than six months, Philip Morris, through Miller, began negotiating with LOTT (Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County - This is our local municipal wastewater management partnership) regarding the amount Philip Morris should pay as its fair share of the $48 million 1994 upgrade to the central sewer processing plant the brewery has been using for waste disposal. Less-than-diligent LOTT officials had neglected for years to collect that share from the brewery. Initially, LOTT said Philip Morris owed $5.9 million, but during later rounds of negotiations a slightly more diligent contingent from Philip Morris got LOTT to whittle this figure down to $4.2 million (though Philip Morris still believed that figure was too high) – this is money that other ratepayers would have to pay if Philip Morris does not. Eventually, Philip Morris refused to pay anything at all; in fact a Philip Morris official threatened to keep LOTT tied up in litigation for years if they tried to collect.

Philip Morris also announced plans to expand the capacity of the brewery. In order to satisfy its expansion plans, Philip Morris announced it would detach from the LOTT system and build its own waste disposal facility. Philip Morris then told LOTT that since it was relinquishing disposal plant capacity, LOTT should pay Philip Morris for the relinquished capacity. LOTT demured on the sensible ground that it should not have to pay Philip Morris for voluntarily relinquishing capacity. If Philip Morris no longer wished to use the LOTT system, it could go its own way, but because the relinquishment was voluntary, LOTT had no legal or moral obligation to pay. **Philip Morris then threatened to close the brewery and put their 250 employees out of work if LOTT did not pay.** Months of negotiation ensued, and Philip Morris' threat to close the brewery hovered over the negotiations process. The company blatantly and overtly held its workers hostage in an attempt to extort money from the local communities.

This apparently is how Philip Morris intends to demonstrate its "commitment" to "Tumwater and the surrounding area."

The local elected officials on the LOTT supervisory committee ultimately succumbed to Philip Morris' extortion, and recently announced it had concluded a deal whereby LOTT ratepayers would pay Philip Morris $8,000,000 in stages as they voluntarily stopped using the LOTT system. In another part of the deal, there is a forgiveness of the $4.2 million debt Philip Morris owes for the 1994 system upgrades. Thus, the total cost of this odious deal will be a $12.2 million bill to the area's ratepayers. The debt forgiveness portion of the deal is in all actuality a debt transference from Philip Morris to the ratepayers in the community.

This is more than corporate welfare – this is extortion, plain and simple. Community members should question a deal that pays Philip Morris millions of dollars so that they can fulfill their desire to increase corporate profits. There is no logical reason to pay Philip Morris for sewer capacity it is voluntarily giving up, but Thurston County politicians aren't accustomed to going toe to toe with the 29th largest corporation in the world. It's like sending Bambi to fight Godzilla.

In 2003, after securing their $12.2 million in debt-transferrence to the residents of Olmypia, Philip Morris closed the brewery and laid off the 250 employees anyway.

Tort Reform

By Dan Pens
June 1996

Perhaps you have heard or read about "litigation reform" in the corporate-owned media. Much of (what passes for) the debate has to do with tort reform, i.e. making it more difficult for citizens to sue corporations for damages. Who didn't hear about the woman who spilled McDonald's coffee on her lap and then reaped a multi-million dollar damage award in a lawsuit? Those who advocate for "reform" used this example to spearhead their campaign to make it more difficult to sue Corporate America and to limit damage awards in such suits.

The tort reform advocates flooded the airwaves and newspapers with their rhetoric: "The woman was careless. She shouldn't have been holding the coffee in her lap. She spilled it on herself. She got a greedy lawyer and together they bilked McDonald's out of millions. This is the kind of abuse that needs to be stopped!"

I'm sure you probably read or heard about this case. But were you ever provided with a complete accounting of the facts considered by the jury who made the award?

McDonald's had previously been sued – numerous times – by customers who were seriously injured by their 180° coffee. They had also conducted "cost/benefit risk assessment" analyses to determine whether or not they should lower the coffee's temperature. The corporation determined what the financial impact (lost sales) would be from lowering the serving temperature to 160 degrees and weighed that against the amount of damages they might anticipate paying in future court actions if they left it at a dangerous 180 degrees. Internal corporate documents revealed that McDonald's made a conscious decision – knowing that it would cause a certain number of injuries to its customers – that it would be more "cost effective" to allow some of their customers to receive severe burns (and settle the damages out of court) than it would be to lower the temperature of their coffee and thus lose "market share" to the competition.

What McDonald's didn't count on was that one plaintiff would choose not to settle out of court. She wanted McDonald's to be prevented from injuring others like herself in the future. That's why the case went to trial.

Jurors later stated that they awarded millions in damages because they also agreed that McDonald's should not consciously choose to gravely injure a small percentage of its customers merely because they might lose market share if they were to make the product safer.

I want to see more!

Do you see anything here you wish we still covered more? Labor struggles? Women's rights? First-hand accounts of the homeless? More activist theory?

The WIP staff loves diversity of topics as much as anyone, but we can only be in so many places at once. If WIP isn't covering it, it's because **you** aren't writing about it!

So please, help us out. Write about what's going on in your community. Report on major events. Interview that guest speaker who's coming to town.

Remember, WIP is a resource, and you should make use of your resources.

Corporate civil rights

By Jacqui Brown Miller
January 2005

"Government of the people, by the people..." These words from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address still touch the heart of our civic culture. Today, however, corporations are empowered to exert far more influence over government than citizens. The rise of corporate dominance promotes a "government of, by, and for corporations." Corporate cash elects our politicians. Corporate lobbyists write our laws. In turn, these laws affect almost every aspect of our lives, including the messages we hear on the airwaves and, thus, the way we think. They affect the air we breathe, our stress levels, our standard of living, our privacy, and our safety as workers and consumers.

People across the country are beginning to discuss how to reform the legal doctrines that give corporations the means to obtain and wield power over our government.

Two little-understood legal doctrines play a pivotal role in making it seem like corporations rule the world. The first is "corporate personhood" – a short-hand phrase to describe how the U.S. Supreme Court classified corporations as people under the U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment and thus granted corporations civil rights, which were to be reserved for citizens.

The second is that money used to influence politics is protected as free speech (corporate "civil rights"). These doctrines allow company owners to use the corporate structure – which was once only a mechanism to raise capital for business projects – as a mechanism to funnel money into government in order to secure corporate-favorable laws. Because this ability is classified as a civil right, which the government cannot violate, citizens find it beyond their authority to pass laws that impose meaningful restrictions on this "speech" – such as campaign finance reform.

The WTO

By Sheryl Kakuta
August 1999

The WTO has panels composed of non-elected trade specialists who act as judges over economic issues, placing them beyond the reach of national sovereignty and popular control. This ensures that community interests will be subordinated to capital. There is no public input, no conflict of interest provisions and the decision-making is secret. In 100 cases, over the first four years of the WTO, all decisions by non-elected corporate panels have favored corporations over labor, public health, the environment and national sovereignty.

The announcement to hold the third WTO Ministerial in Seattle came this March. The Seattle Host Organization (SHO), which is organizing the conference, is co-chaired by Bill Gates; Boeing CEO Phil Condit; Gov. Gary Locke; Seattle Mayor Paul Shell; King County Exec. Ron Sims, and; Seattle Port Commissioner Pat Davis. The Seattle Host Organization is currently trying to fundraise $9,000,000 for the Ministerial. Having some of the most powerful CEOs in the world as co-chairs apparently presents no conflict of interest.

A fundraising letter for the Ministerial signed on March 15th by SHO Chairman Lawrence Parkson attempted to sell access for the wealthy to senior trade officials. A mere $250,000 (Emerald Level) buys passes to opening and closing sessions, the Ministerial dinner, business conference participation, updates on progress of the Ministerial and numerous other benefits. Diamond, Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze Levels are also available. Alas, the beauty of one dollar, one vote. Those with money have a voice, those without don't. The letter further stated that, "sponsors who sign on before May 1st will also be included in a July 'preparatory conference' in Seattle where the private sector will meet with senior U.S. trade officials to discuss priorities for the upcoming Round." Due to popular uproar over this blatant corruption and purchased access to the Ministerial, the July confer-

A case against NAFTA

By T.J. Johnson - June 1992

The proposal to liberalize trade between the United States, Canada and Mexico through the creation of a North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) comes at a unique juncture in the evolution of the world's political economy. The unprecedented restructuring of the global economy which has taken place in recent years has resulted in new patterns of production and trade. The newfound mobility of capital has given rise to a network of global production webs, which have increasingly replaced traditional nation-based corporations and industries as the basis for production and trade. Yet this new international economic order, based as it is on competitive neoclassical economic models and liberal ideology, has done little if anything to further the cause of distributive justice, or improve the living conditions for a majority of the world's people. Indeed, what we have seen is a further concentration of wealth and power into the hands of an elite minority and a corresponding decline in the ability of citizens and their elected national governments to curb the most egregious excesses of the powerful capital elites.

The proposed NAFTA sees to further formalize this arrangement. Under the guise of free trade, NAFTA proponents seek to create a new continental economic order founded on unlimited mobility of capital, which they claim will result in more efficient use of productive resources and creation of greater wealth, with a net enhancement in the quality of life for the people of all three countries. However, many people, including myself, question these assertions and the assumptions on which they are based, and believe the actual results will be a further weakening of the power of organized labor, increased degradation of the natural environment, and a significantly weakened democratic process.

Whose economy?

By Peter Bohmer
February 1995

In the *Olympian* article ["1994: A bit too prosperous"], they quoted an economist: "The bottom line is the economy is doing a bit too well." Isn't an economy its people? Clearly most people are not doing too well. This pro-corporate argument is that economic growth of 4% a year is too high and therefore interest rates will go up. It is not a law of nature that interest rates have to go up. Rather it is decided by the Federal Reserve Bank. The Fed gives fear of inflation as the reason for its actions, but their primary concern is profits, particularly for banks, and the portfolios of the wealthy.

To talk about the present as too prosperous or as a period of too high employment is obscene. It denies the life experiences of millions of people whose existence is made invisible and denied. Rather than working to lower the high unemployment in our society, economists and policy makers have continually raised the amount of unemployment they call "full employment."

Poverty and land value

By Marvin Saillard
December 1991

Poverty is the price we pay in our society for allowing landowners to charge rent-of-land for something they did not produce or make valuable. The presence and activity of all the people in the community make land valuable because people cannot live without access to land. The people in the community further enhance the value of the land by financing the public services through their tax dollars. Because his land has a publicly-created value, the landowner can charge other people rent-of-land for permission to use his land. The landowner has a claim on production without producing anything himself.

The privilege of having a claim upon production without producing anything means that someone else must produce without being able to claim as much as they produced. That is why we must have labor unions: to try to claim back some of the production that landowners claimed through the exercise of their privilege.

Welfare reform

Bill Clinton cuts the safety net

By Jerome Johnson
September 1996

In what Newsweek's Joe Klein calls "monumental callousness," Clinton has signed so-called welfare reform into law. By doing so he's kept his campaign promise to "end welfare as we know it." This promise got Clinton a lot of votes because of the myth that most people on welfare are lazy, promiscuous minorities who can work, but don't, and in fact live better than the rest of us who pay an inordinate amount of tax money to support them. In fact, most welfare recipients are white women, who get off welfare on their own, after about eighteen months. And those eighteen months are no picnic. One of the reasons it's no picnic is because welfare is just $.01 of the Government dollar.

Legislating poverty

By Patty Imani
June 1997

Many failed to recognize that the main function of recent welfare deform legislation was to force the most vulnerable pool of reserve workers into substandard wage labor, and weaken the organizing power of U.S. workers in general, in order to create favorable conditions for increases in capital gains. In order to carry out this goal, legislators have relied on an ideology of hate, stigmatizing impoverished women in need of assistance, in the hope that everyone will simply turn their heads while they attempt to breach all standards of civil rights law in the implementation of their pro-poverty, unfair and unequal doctrine.

In New York, union busting mayor Rudolph Giuliani has used workers within the Work Experience Program (WEP) to reduce city operating budgets, replacing the city's union workers with workers from workfare programs. The group Workfairness has been busy organizing the workfare victims, supporting their rights to the same union protections other city workers have, which include minimum wages of $8 - $10 an hour. Workfairness has gained the support of union leaders in this endeavor.

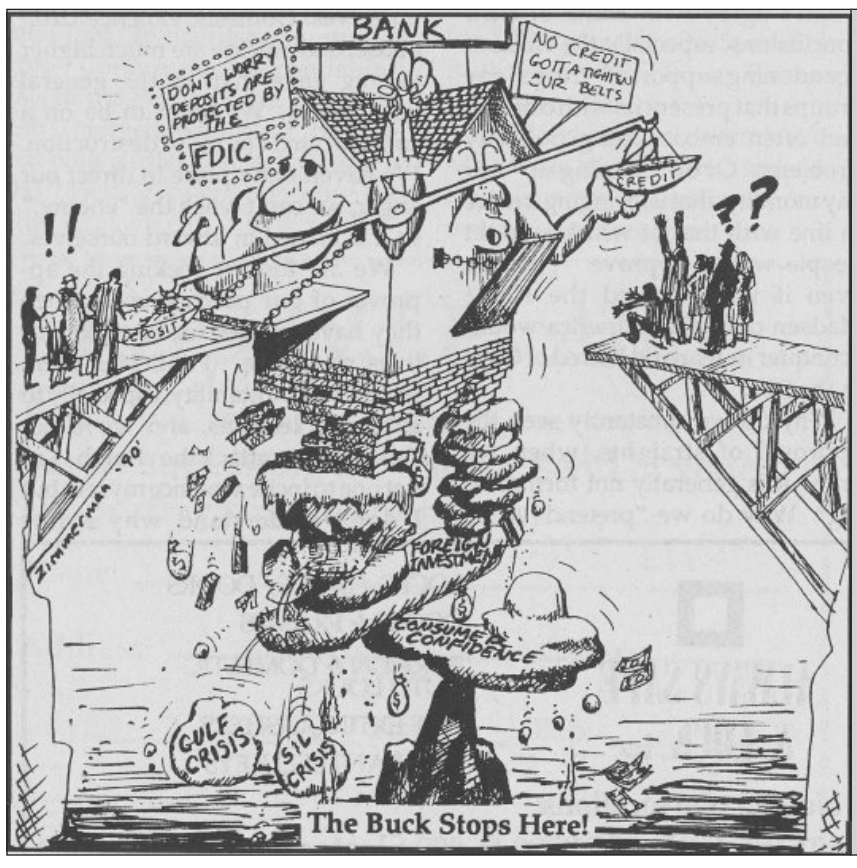
Suspected of Living Above their Means

By Monica Peabody
October 2004

On August 23rd, members of WROC, the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition, and our allies, delivered a SLAM letter to Governor Locke. The letter was patterned after letters DSHS caseworkers send to parents receiving welfare to tell them they are "Suspected of Living Above Their Means." A welfare grant is 40% of the Federal Poverty Level, or $440 a month for a mother with one child. The particular letter we copied said, "The state requires you explain in writing by itemization and statement how you meet expenses of rent $300 utilities $100+ on a $440 grant. Leaving less than $50 to cover non-food items, the expenses of a teenaged son, car insurance, etc, mentions only a few. You also claim to be able to feed a teenager on $238 food stamps. If you do not provide this information within the specified time period, the Department may stop your benefits."

Anyone who spends any time with welfare mamas knows we are a resourceful bunch, as this parent's reply to her caseworker indicates. "Obviously, this does not add up. Often I cannot pay the full amount of rent. So I owe rent and the amount grows each month. I am requesting additional requirements for help with rent. We go without many unnecessary items such as mouthwash, haircuts and Kleenex, new clothes. Therefore, I am requesting support services for help with clothing, liability insurance and ongoing gas expenses for work search. I go fishing and catch and eat fish to help our grocery budget, as well as having a small garden for greens. We also make occasional visits to the food bank. When we get really short, my son might go stay overnight with a friend. I have been extremely honest and cooperative with you. I don't understand why you must create this extra paperwork, which takes time away from my work search and also creates unneeded stress. Please contact me as soon as possible to respond to my requests for additionally requirements and support services."

Governor Locke's SLAM letter informed him we needed information about his current circumstances so we can decide if he is still eligible for state leadership, budgetary input, state payroll and state funded medical benefits. We also asked him to explain in writing by itemization and statement how he meets expenses of corporate welfare, Boeing tax breaks, business subsidies, etc, mentions only a few, leaving less than necessary to cover affordable healthcare, housing, food and cash assistance for low-income families. He also claims to be able to balance the budget (on the backs of the poor) while maintaining the most regressive tax system in the nation. We asked for verification that existing employment opportunities offer a living wage and to allow welfare recipients to attend college or university. We asked Governor Locke to read, sign and return the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25, which says "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or the lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond control. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance."



Jiggerypokery - By Al Zimmerman - Originally printed Jan 1991

The impact of "welfare reform" on children

By Monica Peabody
June 2006

Since President Clinton's Personal Responsibility Act in 1996, known as welfare reform, it seems an inordinate amount of responsibility has been heaped onto children. They are the majority of welfare recipients and the population most likely to be poor in our nation. The majority of poor children live in single parent families. In Washington, a single parent with two children receives only $546 in cash assistance. That amount hasn't increased in 14 years. The parent receives no, or inadequate, child support. They are required to look for work outside the home, while their work as sole caretaker for their children is devalued. Washington's welfare to work program is called Work First, while ironically our foster care system is called Children First.

Work First has done a poor job of moving parents into living wage work. A state survey shows that parents who leave assistance for wages average less than $8 an hour. Rules require parents to take the first job offered, do not allow them to quit that job, and provide childcare support for only one year of college. Washington's Work First program is not a pathway out of poverty or to a better life, as it claims, but a dead end to a lifetime of low wage work, poverty and unending dependence on state benefits.

Parents work hard every day, no matter their socio-economic status. Penalizing families who are struggling to meet their basic needs is unfair to the families, the children and ultimately, to the community.

is coming!

ence was cancelled.

More recently, the Washington State Legislature appropriated $970,000 from the General Fund to the Seattle Host Organization for Ministerial expenses, including the building of facilities and provisioning of equipment. Gov. Locke was a very active participant in this lobbying exercise. Once again, hard earned tax dollars are subsidizing grandiose meetings for the rich. Subsidies for the rich and purchased access are not the only part of the overall grand welcoming scheme; the Seattle Host Organization has declared open season on the minds of Seattle youth. Billionaire tycoon Bill Gates was the first to donate $25,000 to King County Schools as seed money to help develop "free" trade curriculum that will indoctrinate students with capitalist propaganda one month before the Ministerial. He is urging wealthy others to donate $100,000 or more for this cause.

The corporate-owned press and paid-for politicians treat the WTO and global capitalism as a benign system that works for the good of humankind. Political and economic elites claim that liberalized trade or the elimination of government regulations on imports, such as tariffs, quotas, health and environmental policies, with the goal of increasing trade, supposedly leads to greater economic growth and prosperity for all.

In reality, this model has led a fierce attack on workers, undermined governments' rights to protect the environment and public health, eroded democracy and homogenized cultures. Traditional corporations in search of maximum profits move production to where costs are lowest and profits are highest. Regulations that are barriers to maximum profits are battered down or evaded by the threat of capital flight or its actuality. It is now clear that the WTO has elevated corporate power above the sovereign powers of all nation states and marginalized even further the mass majority of people on this planet who were forced into poverty by a 500 year-long process of capital accumulation and racial oppression.

Who is the enemy?

By Ron Jacobs
July 2002

During America's war against the Vietnamese, one of the common plaints of the soldiers in the jungle was that one couldn't tell the "enemy" from a "friend." Eventually, this inability to differentiate turned to a frustration that changed the rules of engagement, at least unofficially. No longer were there enemies and friends among the Vietnamese. They all became the enemy to the GI in the field.

As the war in Afghanistan continues, the likelihood of a similar scenario developing grows ever more likely. Already, US forces have mistakenly killed Afghanis involved in smuggling (a common way of making a living in the mountains of the region), thinking they were Taliban fighters intent on killing US soldiers. Other so-called mistakes have been made when villages were bombed because Taliban and Al-Queda fighters were believed to be residing there. When the dust had settled, however, it was discovered that only civilians had been killed by the US bombs.

Kosovo: Better living through bombing?

By Gar Lipow
May 1999

Cruise missile humanitarianism has multiplied the number of Kosovar Albanian homeless and dead, without saving one life, or stopping one atrocity. By highest estimates, the Kosovo civil war drove 400,000 ethnic Albanians from their homes in 1998; 30,000 of these fled Kosovo. The first two weeks of the bombing increased this to over one million homeless Kosovars; more than 400,000 of whom fled Kosovo. From March 26th through April 13th, NATO escalated the atrocities to double those in the whole year of 1998.

Before our fighter jets flattened large portions of Serbia, Milosevic did not have everything his own way. There was a strong democratic opposition in Yugoslavia, and a strong opposition press. Milosevic was not in a position to completely ignore public opinion. It is far from sure that he could have escalated the level of atrocities.

The first bomb that came close to killing a Yugoslav child changed this. As would happen in the U.S. if bombs were falling on New York, Atlanta, Chicago and Seattle, Yugoslavians rallied 'round the flag. So long as NATO bombs fall on the suburbs and railways of Yugoslavia, there is no atrocity Milosevic can commit which will cost him popular support. War is freedom for tyrants.

The Wolfowitz Doctrine

By Nancy West
May 2003

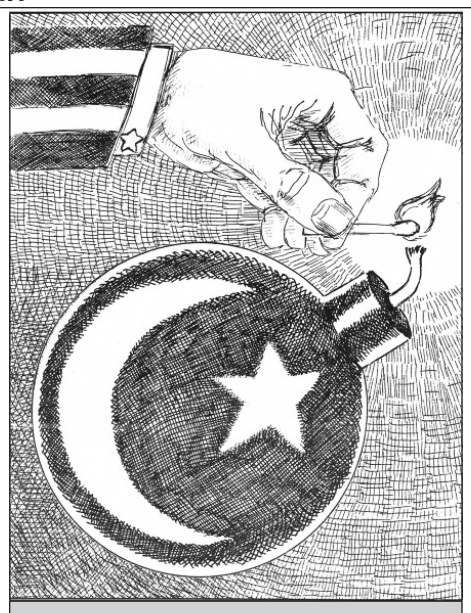
This preemptive invasion of Iraq is not about fighting terrorism and was not triggered by the events of September 11th. It is certainly not about liberating and bringing democracy to the people of Iraq. It is the first step in the implementation of a policy known as the Wolfowitz Doctrine, the basic ideas of which originated years before the World Trade Towers fell. Over 10 years ago a classified Pentagon memo written by Wolfowitz asserted the importance of a U.S. policy based on maintaining an overwhelming global dominance in order to prevent "potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role." The destruction of possible rivals should be the "dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and require[s] that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia." U.S. troops protecting Iraq's oil fields instead of Iraq's cities, museums, libraries and people is the Wolfowitz Doctrine in action.

9-11 and nonviolence

By Glen Anderson - December 2001

Ten years after the end of the Cold War the US has been the ONLY superpower. We have BY FAR the most powerful military on earth. We have thousands of nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert. The US military alone spends more than the next 15 nations combined. Yet even with all of this - $300 billion a year - the Pentagon could not even protect its own building from a few guys with box-cutters!

Violence - and militaristic defense - is a wasteful fraud. It just does not work. In a violent conflict each side feels its own violence is justified, and each round of violence only makes the other side feel more justified in using the next new round of violence. Therefore, violence is the problem - not the solution! The way to break the cycle of violence - and to rise above the ethics of terrorists - is to use nonviolence.



From the front page of the February 1991 WIP, on the eve of the first Gulf War - Graphic by Matt Love

Death by sanctions

By Ron Jacobs
December 1997

Let me state that I am not a fan of Saddam Hussein.

That said, let me further state that the continuing efforts by the United States (under the facade of the United Nations) to intimidate his government are despicable. Under the guise of truce enforcement, the United States is starving Iraqi children and denying ill citizens of that country appropriate medical aid. If there are still "weapons of mass destruction" hidden somewhere in Iraq after more than six years of intensive searches by more than 150 UN arms inspectors, it is unlikely they can be unearthed very quickly and less likely that they will be used given Iraq's weakened military status. Indeed, it is much more likely that the United States military in the region will unleash some of its "weapons of mass destruction" first and in a deadlier fashion.

The Congress, White House and State Department continue to call for firm and aggressive action against the government of Saddam Hussein, saying that his actions "threaten regional stability." At the same time, the US does absolutely nothing to rein in Bibi Netanyahu of Israel whose actions not only threaten that stability, but may destroy any hope for lasting peace. The hypocrisy is obvious. It's not that Iraq's actions threaten the stability of the region in the eyes of the people who live there. It's that they threaten the stability of the corporate investments that the energy companies and the banks that own them have in the region.

Iraq is right in asking that the United States remove its personnel from the arms inspection teams. After all, not more than a year ago the Iraqi military uncovered a CIA plot to kill Saddam. Add to this the hypocrisy of opposing Iraqi attacks on the Kurds while tacitly supporting Turkish military attacks on the same people. There is a reason they don't trust the US. Over and over again they have been lied to. In the minds of the Iraqi government it is apparent that the US will not be satisfied until a regime is in Baghdad whose primary purpose is to do the bidding of American corporate interests in the region.

Victory will not end the war

By Helena Meyer-Knapp
February 1991

Air strikes on Baghdad; ground attack on the entrenched forces in Kuwait; Tomahawk cruise missiles landing with pin-point accuracy: we have heard a great deal recently about how to bring about victory in a war with Iraq. Such talk suggests that victory and an end to the war go hand in hand. But that is not the way wars really end. Victory normally becomes highly probably, often certain, weeks or months before the last shot is fired. We may have to fight on long after we have "won."

As the fighting is beginning we must tell ourselves the truth about what it will take to stop it again. The coalition troops have controlled the onset of war; they are probably powerful enough to ensure a victory. What they do not have is the power to bring the fighting to an end once it begins, particularly not if the coalition "wins." The US has the power to start a war but not necessarily the power to end it.

Fighting on when you are bound to lose *is* unreasonable. But tolerance for suffering and prospects for settlements create the climate that defies reason. The US and the coalition may have to fight long after we become certain that we have "won," even if Iraqi assessments are incomprehensible to us.

We will also have to go on fighting until Iraq can accept the terms that are being offered for post-war settlements. A number of historians have suggested that allied demand for unconditional surrender in World War II actually prolonged the fighting. Most wars this century have not ended until after the outlines of an agreement acceptable to both sides had been developed. US commitments to non-negotiable stands on post-war dispositions may well keep us fighting for a very long time.

Letters from Baghdad

By Joe Carr
June 2005

Military convoys make their passing quite the event. They usually include multiple hummers with machine gunners on top, followed by SUVs and then more hummers. Iraqi traffic keeps a huge distance behind; apparently these convoys have shot-up many random Iraqi cars that accidentally drove too close. All the hummers have white signs with Arabic writing on them; we guess that they say something like "Stay back or we'll kill you!", but it's a paragraph of tiny letters that you have to get pretty close in order to read. Irony has become an art in occupied Iraq.

Armored helicopters frequently fly very low overhead. They fly low so that they're only in view for a short time and are harder to shoot down, but then of course they often have accidents and run into things. We had some discussion about how difficult it must be for a pilot to choose whether to risk being shot down or risk running into something. We concluded that it's best for them to not fly at all, and instead to go home and play with their children.

We found that the bridge was closed to traffic, perhaps because the National Assembly was meeting. Get this, every time the Iraqi National Assembly meets, they shut down the major bridge connecting north and south Baghdad. Can you imagine the US shutting down major highways every time Congress is in session? And we wonder why this new government is so unpopular. We began walking across the bridge as Iraqis are forced to, and quickly learned that it isn't closed to all traffic; military, contractors, and Iraqi National Guard (ING) vehicles whiz by, often at dangerously high speeds, despite all the walkers. The bridge is about a half a mile long, and lined with Iraqi women begging for money, men selling cold soda, and children offering to shine shoes.

There's a new soldier in town

By David Lynn
November 2005

"Support the Troops," is a slogan no longer held captive by ultra-conservatives who believe if you do not support the war in Iraq, you do not support our troops. In reality, supporting our troops means working to end the war and bringing all of our military personnel safely home, as well as honoring soldiers refusing to participate in the Iraq war -a war that more than 50 percent of Americans no longer believe in.

Although Alabama-born and Tennessee-raised Sgt. Kevin Benderman served with distinction in Iraq during the initial invasion of 2003, when Benderman was tapped for a second tour late last year, he chose the moral high ground over further participation in a war he could no longer defend. As a result of his moral convictions, Benderman was criminally convicted at Fort Stewart, Georgia, landing him recently in the Fort Lewis stockade serving a 15-month sentence for "missing movement." Benderman also lost his hard-earned Sgt. stripes and upon release from prison, will be branded with a dishonorable discharge.

Benderman received two Army Commendation Medals during his first tour in Iraq because, among a list of other attributes, he served with "distinction." Medals aside, the reality of serving in Iraq is seared into Benderman's conscience. After witnessing a pack of dogs savage the bodies of dead Iraqi men, women and children and after hearing an officer's order not to care for a young girl screaming in pain from severe burns, Benderman would never be the same. Those experiences changed his values, morals and conscience. Ask any war veteran and most will acknowledge a similar path.

"I spent six months over there, and I came back and thought about it. What I know is that it's inhumane. It's turning 18-year-old men and women into soulless people," Benderman has stated. "I went to war, I never ran from it. I experienced it and I realized it's not what I should be doing. In my opinion, it's not what anybody should be doing . . . "

Benderman applied for conscientious objector's (C/O) status just ten days before he was to re-deploy to Iraq for a second tour. In fact, Benderman has applied for C/O status twice, both of which were flatly rejected even though a review of his applications appears to meet all the necessary criteria for C/O status as outlined in Army Regulation 600-43.

Kevin Benderman was charged with desertion, but was found guilty of a lesser charge, "missing movement." As a result, his distinguished tour of duty is being played-out at the Fort Lewis stockade under conditions not unlike Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay prisons. Benderman reports: prisoners' families not being officially informed where they are, severe overcrowding, denial of contact with lawyers, no heat, raw sewage leaking from overhead pipes, money stolen from confiscated bank cards, female guards who routinely watch male prisoners shower and use toilets and an exposed prostitution ring resulting in only minor disciplinary action.

According to an Amnesty International "Urgent Alert" declaration, "Amnesty International considers his (Kevin Benderman's) objection to war to be genuine and credible, and also that he took reasonable steps to secure release from his military obligations, and therefore considers him a prisoner of conscience."

Monica Benderman believes her husband is a hero, a champion of true morality and so do many others as confirmed by the hundreds of letters of support now pouring into Fort Lewis. Kevin Benderman deserves our support for his courage and our outrage over his imprisonment. He represents the conscience of the majority of Americans who say, "No more."

The occupation of the Capitol Building

By Jackie Wolf
July 1991

As it turned out, the occupation of the House Chambers in Olympia was the only occupation of a government building in the country prior to the war. The national media reported our actions, and I've been told that we served as inspiration for anti-war protesters all over the world. To those who would accuse us of "playing to the media," I would say, of course. What other mechanism do we have to get our voices heard? What other action could we have taken that day to get the attention of our governmental representatives, to let them know how deeply and absolutely we were opposed to Bush's policy of using military might to impose their New World Order?

It is true that we did not stop the war, but I am proud that we tried, that we did everything short of launching an attack on the Pentagon or running through the streets smashing the windows of government buildings, which leads to my final question. Now that we all know to what lengths they will go, how much suffering are we of this country willing to have imposed in our name before we will take whatever action is necessary to put an end to it? Are we going to continue to politely ask them not to do it anymore as long as they are not doing it to white people in the USA? Imagine how different it could have been if people across the country had done what we did in Olympia. I believe that when enough of us get together and build a movement that will put a stop to their business as usual, moving beyond the realm of leftist rhetoric and liberal reform, they will have no choice but to get out of the business of killing.

For these Strykers, the road to Iraq goes through downtown Olympia - Photo by Sandy Mayes, May 2006

Downtown Olympia protest march against US sanctions of Iraq. The sign on the right reads "Over 1 million Iraqis dead since 1991." From the cover of the March 1998 WIP, photo by Wendy Ortiz.

The Iraq Memorial to Life

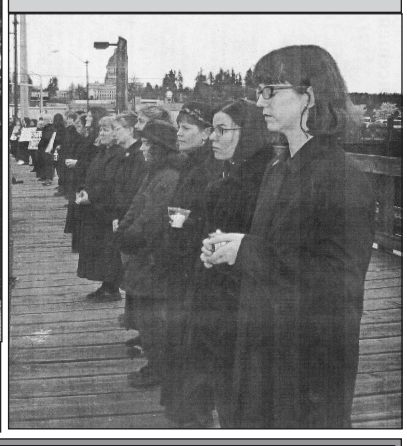
Heritage Park
Photo by Berd Whitlock

With no end in sight for the occupation of Iraq, Olympians help clog the gears of war - Photo by Phoebe Blanding, November 2007

Protest of impending Iraq War, downtown Olympia, Feb. 15, 2003

WOMEN IN BLACK

From the cover of the May 2003 issue of WIP



If I am guilty of any crime, it is that I learned too much and cared too deeply for the meaningless loss of my fellow soldiers and my fellow human beings.

-Ehren Watada

Every week since 1980, the Fellowship of Reconciliation has represented peace in downtown Olympia. (If only our City Council was that reliable!) - Photo by Bob Ziegler

To save our republic
Stop our en
Have the courage to live nonviolently
THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE PEACE, GOODWLL
OLYMPIA FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION
REDUCE VIOLENCE IN ALL AR OF SOCIET
is one family.

A personal account of the women's action at the Port of Olympia

By Daisy Montague
December 2007

November 13, 2007, a Tuesday evening around 9 pm, will be forever etched in my mind as a day when a group of strong women took direct action to halt the war of aggression against the people of Iraq. 38 other women and I decided to sit in front of the main gates of the Port of Olympia to stop the military vehicles from the 2nd infantry 3rd brigade from moving from the Port of Olympia to Fort Lewis military base, where they would be recommissioned only to be returned to Iraq to continue the bloodshed again. We do not agree with the military occupation of Iraq and feel that we have exhausted our options. Petitioning and writing letters to our congresspeople in an attempt to end the war have been to no avail.

When the women's group was established to create an action without any male bodies, I was concerned that we would be reducing our numbers by half. The police have a tendency to be more aggressive toward the smaller groups of protesters. I was worried, but my sisters in the women's group reassured me that this decision would not only create a huge impact on the community, but would also attract more women to join us. They were right. We began with about 15 women who wanted to be a part of the direct action and eight who wanted to be a part of the support group. Our direct action group numbers more than doubled and our support group numbered 300 people who were at the scene of the protest.

As soon as the riot police arrived on the scene, we made our move. The energy was high as we linked arms in communion and made a line that stretched from the sidewalk at Batdorf & Bronson coffee roasters to the edge of the gate on the opposite side of the street. We sat down with arms linked, many with bandanas around our necks and goggles on our heads to protect ourselves from the chemical weapons that the police had been using so generously on anti-war protesters. As we occupied the road, our support people moved to the right of us to protect us from the heckling of the pro-war protesters. We also had people behind us chanting, "Ain't no power like the power of the sistas because the power of the sistas don't stop!"

The women of this action sat on the cold pavement in solidarity with the women of Iraq and women all over the world who are victims of violence by outside forces, as well as hostile intimate forces in their own homes. We continually communicated to the police that we were non-violent protesters and that no force was necessary to remove us from the streets.

As I think back on the action the women took, I understand what a profound and human achievement we were a part of. In our patriarchal society, women are considered to be weak, submissive, and domesticated in their natural right; I believe we were courageous and powerful in our challenge of the state apparatus. It was amazing to see the cops squirm as they changed their tactics to clear out a road full of women, as opposed to a group of integrated protesters. There were two news teams with cameras on the police and us during the action, which probably swayed the police from using unnecessary force. The police hauled us off one-by-one into vans and into a city bus hired from InterCity Transit of Olympia. It took the van an entire hour to get to the city jail, mere blocks away. They held us until 4 in the morning.

I am proud to have been arrested on these terms of civil disobedience along with the other courageous women. These people understand that it is our duty as civilians of the USA to challenge a corrupt government that is waging an aggressive war against a country that poses no threat to our safety. May the power of the people never stop, and may the women be leaders of the movement that has come to call in our own city of Olympia.

False overtures

By Jason Summers
April 1991

Since the 1967 Arab/Israeli war the U.S. has consistently blocked any settlement to the Palestinian crisis to the point of vetoing a number of United Nations resolutions. The U.S. and Israel have stood alone in the world in preventing a settlement to the conflict. It would be naive to think that now of all times the United States has seen the errors of its ways and is legitimately concerned about the Palestinian's plight. In fact, the administration's new peace initiative is not new at all, and is still aimed at getting the Arab states and the Palestinians themselves to renounce the PLO. If it is true that right now is one of the weakest moments in the history of the movement for Palestinian statehood, then it just may be an opportune time for the U.S. and Israel to attempt a settlement, one that would no doubt be in their favor. But even if the United States would be willing to work on this conflict objectively, would Israel really be willing to come to a settlement?

From an interview of Gaza resident Dr. Eyad el-Serraj, by Craig Hymson

September 1995

This is the dilemma you see for the Palestinian. On one hand, we feel that Hamas is being played against the peace process by the Israelis, [...] by stalling and claiming "security reasons." But at the same time, you feel that the Israelis will never leave the Gaza and West Bank settlements without resistance. So what should we do: resist or just sit down and be quiet and show good will so the Israelis will willingly leave? Our past experience is so bitter, and so bad with the Israelis. Every time there is some quietness, they expand the settlements. This is the situation. On the one hand I want peace to prevail. I want people not to kill each other any more. [...] I want the Israelis and the Palestinians to live. But at the same time, I don't want these settlements here! So I am personally in a dilemma. Do I support Hamas when they attack the settlements and the Army? (And by the way, I completely condemn the attacks against civilians.) Or do we just show the Israelis our good will to the maximum and hope they will leave, knowing from the past experience that they will not leave?

You need imaginative and strong leadership on both sides to take decisive action. The people will follow as long as they feel that this leadership is keen on the protection of the people and their interests and that there is hope at the end of the tunnel – something to look forward to. The Israelis want to live in peace. Fine. I don't think the Israelis are not ready to sacrifice the settlements for the sake of peace. They are ready, but they need leadership that can tell them very plainly and painfully, "Look, we cannot have peace with settlements! We can have peace without them!" You know the minute the Israelis would say this, the Palestinian masses, if not the leadership, would respond by circling Hamas and putting them in jail, if they continued the violence. We would say, "We don't want you anymore! You are completely against us." Then my dilemma – Do I support Hamas because they are attacking the settlements? – would be solved. Then I will have no option but to tell Hamas: "Listen! No more war, no more violence. We want to live in peace. We have the West Bank and Gaza. We have to settle on that." And that is it. We need a strong leadership on both sides, but basically on the Israeli side, because the Israelis are the ones who have the power now. They have the land, they have the army, they have the money, they have everything. So they have to take decisive action. Look at the question of Syria. The Golan Heights are occupied. Syria is insisting on the land back. If you want to have full peace, you have to have full land.

Rachel Corrie's detractors seek to silence message of Hope and Peace

By Steve Niva
April 2007

A year after Rachel Corrie was crushed to death while defending a Palestinian home from demolition by an Israeli army bulldozer in the Gaza Strip, I visited the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel's army and illegal Israeli settlements to see the massive Israeli wall that will enclose Palestinians within small enclaves of land.

Rachel Corrie, as a peace dove in the 2002 Procession of the Species - Photo by Eli Sterling

I met a Palestinian man and his young child sitting near a poster of Rachel Corrie, which were all over the area, as they watched their family's olive tree orchard razed by Israeli bulldozers to build this wall. I told him that she had been a student at my college in the US and that I knew her family. He told me his village had just held a one-year memorial service in her honor because she had given them hope for peace; she showed them that the Palestinian people were not forgotten by the world.

By contrast, the shrill agitation by some against the very staging of the play *My Name is Rachel Corrie* at the Seattle Repertory Theater, and factually false articles about Rachel Corrie castigating Corrie as a stooge of terrorists can only be explained as an attempt to silence the hope and message of peace that is Rachel Corrie's true legacy.

Hope is the antidote to despair and violence. And it is hopelessness and despair that Palestinians have felt in the past few decades as their land has been relentlessly stolen from beneath their feet to build spacious Israeli settlements and their future whittled down to caged enclosures surrounded by an Israeli wall.

One can certainly blame the ineffectual Palestinian leadership for many mistakes and one can blame Palestinian extremists for damaging the moral justness of the Palestinian cause through murderous and strategically worthless suicide attacks.

But none of this justifies Israel continuing to illegally steal Palestinian land to build new settlements or building a wall deep within Palestinian land to annex these settlements, nor does it prevent Israel from taking unilateral steps to vacate completely the land that it has illegally occupied since 1967. Moreover, none of this should cause one to blindly support Israeli policies that crush the hope that Rachel Corrie helped nurture.

But instead of joining with Jimmy Carter, Rachel Corrie and countless others, many Israeli and Jewish, who recognize that Israel's occupation and settlements are unjustified and prevent peace, these critics peddle defamation and falsehoods about Corrie masquerading as reasonable criticism.

They are showing they will slander and discredit anyone who dares to understand Palestinians' legitimate grievances with Israel or acknowledge that Israel itself has committed grave and well documented abuses of Palestinian human rights. And they are providing cover for the very extremist Israeli policies of land theft, colonization and abuse that have created a fertile ground for extremism and violence, not hope.

For how else can one explain the constant repetition of false claims about Rachel Corrie that are no longer taken seriously, in many cases by Israel itself?

First, claiming that Corrie was defending terrorists is contradicted by the fact that the Israeli army has never claimed nor provided any evidence that Dr. Samir Nasrallah, whose house Corrie was defending, or anyone else in that neighborhood of Gaza, were concealing any tunnels or were engaged in any attacks on Israelis.

Second, claiming that Corrie was providing cover for suicide bombers is easily proven false by the fact that no Palestinian suicide bombers inside Israel had come from Gaza three years before nor during the time Corrie was there.

Third, claiming that Corrie was working for a pro-terrorist and anti-Israel organization is contradicted by the fact that the International Solidarity Movement to End the Occupation is composed of leading Palestinian voices of non-violence and supported by numerous Israeli peace groups.

Fourth, claiming that by resisting Israel's home demolitions in Gaza Corrie threatened Israel's security is contradicted by the fact that these home demolitions were meant for one reason: to take more land for the 7,000 Israeli settlers who illegally occupied 30 per cent of Gaza's land.

Israel's more fervent defenders justify Israel's occupation and settlements with the continually recycled myth that Israel has always extended its hand of peace while Palestinians have always rejected it. This myth conveniently ignores the fact that Israel's "generous offer" at Camp David in 2000 was based on Israel annexing the bulk of its settlements thereby cutting any Palestinian state into five tiny enclaves surrounded by Israel. And many tout Israel's recent withdrawal from Gaza, but they ignore Israel's withering siege upon its imprisoned population.

Those who truly support a balanced and just peace in the Middle East should honestly debate the life and legacy of Rachel Corrie. Her very act of acknowledging legitimate Palestinians' grievances and her promotion of alternatives to violence was a message of hope and peace that is sorely lacking today. By attacking the messenger, Rachel Corrie's detractors are sending a clear message opposed to hope and peace.

Go to rachelcorriefoundation.org for updates on the Corries' current lawsuit against Israel.

Remembering Rachel

By Chris Allert
April 2003

Rachel was my friend. I'm still overwhelmed with sadness at her passing. I'm still too sad to be angry about what happened. I like to think that I'm not angry because it was anger that killed her. But I know that I'm not angry right now simply because my sadness is so great, that there is no room in my heart for anger right now. Whatever it was that killed her I know that for her there can be no justice. Whatever it was that killed her I know that the injustice we live with is that our friend Rachel is gone. Whatever it was that killed her I know that nothing can bring her back. All we can do is remember her.

In another part of Rafah, at about the same time Rachel was killed, a Palestinian was shot by an Israeli soldier. I don't know his name. I don't know who he was. I don't know who his friends were. His picture wasn't in the papers all around the world. There was no obituary for him in Ha'aretz as there was for Rachel. I know that his family and friends must feel for his passing much as I feel for Rachel's. I know that if she had the power, Rachel would have given all the attention on her death to his.

How can we remember Rachel? I can think of no more fitting tribute than for us to remember the Palestinian who died beside her, to feel for his friends and family as I wish the soldier driving the bulldozer could feel for us. I can think of no more fitting tribute than for all of us in Olympia to mourn each and every one of the losses of the people of Rafah as if they were our own. Whenever we hear that someone in Rafah has died, let us find out who he or she was.

The people of Rafah mourned the loss of Rachel as if she were one of their own. They loved her as a sister. "Rachel Corrie. USA Citizen with Palestinian blood," they painted on the wall across from her office in Rafah. Can we love the people of Rafah as they loved Rachel? Can we love the people of Rafah as we love our own friends and brothers and sisters? I think this is what Rachel was working for. Maybe someday no one will be killed in such a brutal way because we will love all the people of the world as our own.

I think it may be official now that Rafah is the poorest place in the world. There used to be a middle class here - recently. And then the bulldozers come and take out people's vegetable farms and gardens. What is left for people? Tell me if you can think of anything. I can't.
-Rachel Corrie

City Council rejects Rafah

By Phan Nguyen
May 2007

On Tuesday, April 17, the Olympia City Council opened a public hearing on the proposal by the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project (ORSCP) to formalize a sister city relationship with the Palestinian city of Rafah. The public communications period had begun with a racist diatribe against a supposed Asian threat, in reference to the recent Virginia Tech shootings. It followed with several racist diatribes against a supposed Palestinian/Arab/Muslim threat, and it ended with the City Council pandering to this supposed threat and denying formal sister city status with Rafah.

50 people spoke in favor of the sister city proposal, while 24 spoke against. The city council voted 4-2 against the proposal, with TJ Johnson and Laura Ware voting in favor. Joe Hyer was absent, and all others voted against. Thus it was ironic that those who spoke in support outnumbered the opposition 2 to 1, but that the proposal was shot down by the city council 2 to 1.

From an interview with ANC member Fred Dube

By "Ace" Goodman
June 1990

Goodman: I've talked to a lot of whites in South Africa, older whites, who can envision a gigantic race war in South Africa's future, where they would be out shooting anybody who was black. They can envision *that*, and talk about *that*, but the idea of a democratic South African government that was mostly black – that was incomprehensible to them.

Fred Dube: I can understand that. Many of them believe their position in society and their privileges in South African society are predetermined by God. Now they can't envision anything that is not like that because to them that is anti-God. These people, particularly the Calvinists, believe that everything was predestined. But those are not the ones that scare me, because those who are like that I think will accept change as predestined too, when it does happen. They will resist that change, but when it happens I think they will accept it as predestined. It is the English-speaking people that are not going to accept, not in large numbers. There will be some who will not accept change into a democratic society, because that democratic society would mean all privileges are gone and everybody is going to be equal with everybody. I don't think that they are able to deal with that.

Goodman: When I was hitchhiking through South Africa, I was always hearing complaints about all these "terrible myths" that the American media was spreading about South Africa, and one was that all the whites were wealthy. And I'd be in this really nice car, going to somebody's really nice farm or house, with a bunch of servants. And I'd gotten to visit Soweto. And they're telling me how the whites aren't wealthy...

Fred Dube: Even the poor white in South Africa is so spoiled that he expects to have a black servant. So you are not telling a lie about that, it's true. They think that God gave them that privilege, that it's not something that came from the barrel of a gun. But the truth is it came from the barrel of the gun.

Observing the El Salvador elections

By Larry Mosqueda
April 1999

On Sunday, March 7, 1999, El Salvador held its third national elections (and second presidential election) since the Peace Accords of 1992 were signed. This writer was part of an international delegation which observed the elections. Of the 110 observers, about 10 were current or past residents of Olympia. The group was sponsored by several groups such as the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and the Mission of International Observers.

The biggest winner [in the election] was abstentionism. Only about one-third of the voters were able to cast their votes. While in the U.S., this is often attributed to apathy; this is too simple for the El Salvadoran reality. As Michael Parenti has said, "you should not confuse apathy with antipathy and alienation," and in the case of El Salvador, enforced abstentionism.

The process of voting is very difficult. One must produce a birth certificate to obtain a voting card (this usually takes two trips), voting is not done by residence, but rather you are assigned a location by your last name, and transportation is not readily available to the poorest of the poor (the vast majority), either before or during the election day.

After the 1997 national legislative elections (where the FMLN came within one legislative seat of becoming the leading political party in the country), both the FMLN and ARENA [the traditional ruling party] pledged to implement electoral reform, such as a national registry, a single identification card, neighborhood voting, proportional representation, greater oversight and training by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), and non-partisan transportation for all citizens on election day. Despite the efforts of the FMLN after the 1994 and 1997 elections, the ARENA party has consistently blocked these reforms.

When the members of our delegation met with U.S. officials at the U.S. Embassy, we were told that the FMLN was the political party blocking reform. This was patently absurd since an increase in the voting population would be of great benefit for the FMLN.

Cultural delegation from Santo Tomás

By Dave Groves
May 1990

A major people-to-people cultural exchange will take place this fall (with your help). The Thurston Santo Tomás Sister County Association is planning to sponsor six Tomásinos' (Santo Tomás residents) in a visit to Thurston County. The visitors include Aurora Baez, who was the catalyst for the Santo Tomás chapter of the Nicaraguan Women's Association and has received a salary of about $20 a month for the past five years. Other visitors include a high school student; a teacher of history, economics, soccer and baseball; a nurse in charge of vaccination programs; a peasant farmer who has organized for the union, UNAG; and a Catholic priest.

Santo Tomás was chosen as a sister county or region with Thurston County because of the work of the Olympia Construction Brigade which helped construct a new sewing cooperative in Santo Tomás. The many friends developed there served as a foundation for the association's work which included a material aid drive in 1989 and finding baseball equipment to outfit six kids' baseball teams there. Jean Eberhardt and Judy Seirano met with the Santo Tomás association when they visited in January and February of this year and the delegation is eager to talk with all segments of the Thurston County population.

There are many reasons to build on our relations with Nicaragua: to understand food policy in underdeveloped nations, to build on international education, find environmental solutions, friendships, and to promote self-determination.

Caravan to Chiapas

By David Abeles and Greg Bye
April 1994

A group has been formed in response to the recent uprising in the Mexican state of Chiapas. The Coalition in Solidarity with the Indigenous People of Chiapas is organizing to send a peace caravan to the Chiapas area this summer. One outcome of this effort is to, hopefully, coincide the caravan's arrival in Chiapas with the Mexican presidential elections on August 21.

The brutal Mexican counter-insurgency during the first two weeks of January uprooted tens of thousands of Chiapanecos from their homes and forced them into makeshift refugee camps. The coalition supports the peoples' efforts to reconstruct their lives and return to their homes.

The current situation in Chiapas provides an opportunity for positive change for the Mexican people, who have suffered through years of dictatorships, starvation, and misery – the latest being the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA is perceived by Marcos, a spokesperson for the insurgents, as "a death sentence to the indigenous people of Mexico."

In response to the uprising, the Mexican government has promised major reforms in the electoral process and improvement of the lives of Indians. To ensure that these promises are not empty rhetoric, it is important that the international movement for peace and justice join in solidarity with the insurgents' cause.

Cuba in 1995

By Kim Sherman & Chuck Domitrovich
March 1995

The fall of the USSR, Cuba's most important trading partner, combined with the US embargo has had a devastating effect on the Cuban economy, causing the most severe economic crisis since the 1959 revolution. It has created shortages in fuel, medical supplies, food, machinery and spare parts, and a vast array of consumer items.

Because there are major differences between rural and metropolitan areas, our brigade spent a week in each. The countryside of Cuba has historically offered the strongest support for the revolution, and shortages tend to be less severe than in urban areas. With shortages of fuel impeding transport, Havana has been hit hardest by food scarcity. The black market is much more of a part of daily life, and often the only place where food is available. Discontent runs much higher here than in rural areas. However, reporters from mainstream media rarely look further than Havana for their stories, and often not beyond the blackmarketeers who cluster around their hotels. They thus miss most of what is happening in Cuba. In fact, a top priority for Cuba today is to increase agricultural production, and to improve distribution of food. Programs to address these issues are being primarily implemented in the countryside. Most of Cuba's state-owned and run farms, for example, have recently been turned into cooperatives, increasing the control that individual farm workers have over production, and introducing incentives to improve production and distribution.

Uprising in Oaxaca: A first-hand account

By Rochelle Gause
January 2007

The six month old teacher's strike turned popular uprising in Oaxaca has continued to face incredible government repression throughout the past month. The repressive acts began at the hands of the state government death squads, composed of plain-clothed police and PRI supporters, and grew through the arrival of the Federal Preventative Police in Oaxaca at the end of October. The illegal detentions peaked on Nov. 25, in time to clean things up in preparation for Felipe Calderon's inauguration as the fraudulently elected new President of Mexico. Of the 150 detained on the 25th, Oaxaca state governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz admitted that up to 80% were in no way connected to APPO (Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca), the main coordinating body of the movement.

Throughout the last six months, there have been over 500 people detained; almost all who have been released reported psychological and physical torture. Currently there are over 140 remaining in prison, the majority transferred to federal prison in states outside Oaxaca, far from their families and lawyers and denied medical attention. Stories coming out of these prisons include torture, 60 reports of sexual assault, rape threats and forced false confessions.

On Dec. 17, a 2,000-strong women's march was held to welcome home 43 prisoners who were released. As the prisoners climbed off the buses some were wearing blood-stained and torn clothing. When asked by reporters about their treatment, many stated they were unable to comment because they were told if they do those remaining in prison will pay for it.

There are still many outstanding arrest warrants for members of APPO. Because one of the major goals of APPO has been to create a democratic governance structure, they have been highly transparent and the names of those involved and elected as representatives of various regions are easily found in meeting minutes and online. This has made it easy for the government to target those involved in the movement. The police have made numerous private home searches and have taken teachers from in front of their students in their classrooms, in front of children as young as kindergarteners. On top of the detentions, an unclear number of movement members remain disappeared and the death toll is now over 20.

Very few detentions of those responsible for the murders have taken place. The two men detained for the murder of Brad Will, the New York independent journalist killed in late September, have been released. Three others known to have been involved in the shooting were never detained. All five were either PRI elected officials, PRI supporters, or plain-clothed state police officers.

The Zapatistas in Chiapas called for an International Day of Action on December 22 in solidarity with the people of Oaxaca. According to the Zapatistas the goals of the actions include "the living reappearance of the disappeared, for the freedom of the detained, for the exit of Ulises Ruiz and the federal forces from Oaxaca, for the punishment of those guilty of torture, rape and murder."

Reflections on Sarajevo

By Linda Beekman
December 1993

Sarajevo was a challenge in every way. Only safe back at home do I realize how stressful it was. People new to the city asked, "Where are the safe places?" The answer was there are no safe places. This was the only point of solidarity that I felt I shared with the people of Sarajevo. I had a press pass and could leave at a moment's notice, I could bring in extra food for myself, but I couldn't protect myself from the gunfire.

I didn't see any shells explode, but I did see a man killed from a sniper's bullet - another sobering experience. I also visited the hospital and saw first-hand the horrors of war on children: a child covered with scars from shrapnel, struggling to breathe, with no electricity for a respirator; a young girl, maybe eight, who was okay except that the lower part of her right leg was missing; a toddler who was in the hospital when the war started but became separated from his parents who live outside Sarajevo and couldn't get back in to get him. Two thousand children have been killed in Sarajevo since the war began 19 months ago.

The first question people would ask me is, why did I come to this hell? The second was, how long was I staying? My response was that I came because if I were in their position, I'd want someone to come for me. I also said that I came to listen, so that when I returned I could be a voice for them.

Honduras moves to the left

By Marco Rosaire Rossi
January 2009

In late August, inside a capital city in Central America, a giant banner was hung portraying Cuba's revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega and Bolivia's President Evo Morales. The banner advocated the signing of ALBA—which in English stands for the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas and means "dawn" in Spanish. ALBA is a trade agreement between Latin American countries that supports the principles of solidarity, non-interference, respect for independence, complimentary, and fair trade, a trade agreement that the United States is strongly opposed to. In the streets, tens of thousands of supporters gathered to support ALBA. They waved their national flag, but also the Venezuelan one, and held banners supporting the Sandinistas and the FMLN. Socialist and anti-imperialist rhetoric was on the lips of both the speakers and the supporters.

This capital wasn't Managua, or Havana—traditional places where one would hear such remarks—it was Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The people were celebrating President Zelaya's signing of the ALBA agreement, making Honduras the sixth member of the fair trade alliance. This past October, Honduras' congress approved the deal, solidifying the membership.

Slick Wille and the media

By Jerome Johnson - April 1992

Slick Willie plays the race card better than any other Democrat. He talks about ending the "divisiveness" of the 1980s and "bringing America together." Yet there is scarcely a word about civil rights, women's issues, health, comparable worth or other people issues. His appointment of many minorities to positions in state government is billed as "proof" of his commitment to civil rights and the cause of his "biracial support." Rather than affirmative action, it is mere shrewd politicking: Clinton knew he needed minority votes locally and nationally. His token appointments obscure a lack of broad public policy and reinforce the myth of individual achievement. Extolling the fact that he got 60% of the black vote, he doesn't mention the tragically low turnout. None of the black people I know support him; he rails against welfare in [David] Dukesque rhetoric while endorsing boot camps as prison "reform" and the death penalty, neither of which work but make the law-and-order constituency feel good. It's a nifty way of promoting a "Democratic" agenda while following the conventional wisdom that says supporting the traditional Democratic coalition is a sure way to lose elections by "alienating the middle class" and "pandering to special interests."

Slick Willie didn't get to national infamy all alone: he had more than enough help from our "free" and "objective" media. For some reason, the media has consistently worshipped him since his entrance into the race. Early on, Time lovingly featured him on its cover, and it hasn't let up since; days before he lost the New Hampshire primary, the media kept calling him the "front-runner" even as polls showed Tsongas ahead with 25% of the vote. When covering the Democrats, media's lead or focus is too often on Clinton, even if other candidates are doing important things the same day. Clinton's personal life doesn't bother the media, either; the same media that howled for Gary Hart's blood in 1987 for spending an weekend on Bimini hardly wagged a finger at Slick Willie for carrying on with Gennifer Flowers for years before getting her a state job.

My liberal friends, many of whom oughtta know better, support Clinton because he's "electable," and that "even he's better than Bush – at least he's a Democrat." Well, I totally disagree. I don't think Clinton's essentially Republican values make him preferable to King George simply because the label on the package says Democrat. With a few exceptions, no Democratic leaders or traditional coalition members have endorsed him. Out here in real life, only two people admit to supporting him. There's a new scandal about him almost every week, but all he does is flash his shit-eating grin and tell us what we already know: that he "isn't perfect." The King's campaign people slaver at the thought of running against him, often publicly. Is this what makes an overgrown frat boy "electable"?

The nomination of Clarence Thomas

By Sylvia Smith and Teresa Jennings
August 1991

A great deal of background material has been reported regarding Thomas' childhood and the poverty of his family. By contrast, discussion and debate concerning his philosophy (particularly, his attachment to "natural law") has been meager.

In "The Higher Law Background of the Privileges or Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment," Judge Thomas describes natural law as "the higher law political philosophy of the Founding Fathers." He continues, "Without recourse to a higher law, we abandon our best defense of judicial review – a judiciary active in defending the Constitution, judicious in its restraint and moderation."

In the same article, he refers to both "judicial activism" and "unenumerated rights." He cites Roe v Wade as a "current case which is considered an expression of unenumerated right." While he does not mention whether or not he believes the decision was based on natural law, he does mention his "misgivings about activist judicial use of the Ninth Amendment." He states, "rather than being a justification of the worst type of judicial activism, higher law is the only alternative to the willfulness of both run-amok majorities and run-amok judges."

According to Thomas, "natural rights" does not allow for "arbitrary decisionmaking." Thomas claims further that "differences in opinion do not refute the notion of objectivity." While we are not entirely sure what he means by this (the doublespeak virus appears to have attacked him here), we think he is calling into question the veracity of relativism and promoting that there is absolute truth within the reach of man.

What is perhaps most dangerous about Thomas' view of natural law is that his thinking points to a belief that it emanates from "higher law" or God's law (if you will). He seems unwilling to entertain that what you consider "natural law" or a "natural right," he might consider to be "judicial activism" or vice versa.

Jiggerypokery - By Al Zimmerman - Originally printed Jan 1992

The Ralph Nader debate

By Thomas Walton
November 2000

With the money party-sponsored debate commission's forceful exclusion of Ralph Nader from the presidential debates as both participator and observer, the arguments between Naderites and supporters for Gore have reached a heated pitch. The arguments for Nader are based on a desire to break the theoretical and political mold that has failed historically to instigate change. The arguments for Gore, on the other hand, are little more than campaign slogans tainted with the fear so typical of American politics. The "lesser of two evils," and "a vote for Nader is a vote for Bush" are hardly well thought out positions to bring to an argument, rather more like expressions of an awful faith, furnished apartments in which to hide.

The Gories claim that Naderites are naïve and idealistic; they campaign: "gradual change, not radical change." Gore supporters are "realistic" and "practical." It is true that Naderites are more idealistic than Gories, after all, the former have ideas about the environment within which they live and work, while the latter simply subscribe to ideals that, even though they support them through their subscriptions, they don't necessarily claim as theirs. Is this practical, realistic?

By Gorie reasoning it is idealistic, in a democratic society, to expect the debate commission to allow third parties into the debates because the practical reality of it all is that a candidate has to have 15% of popular opinion. The fact that two parties, behind closed doors, have created a debate commission to exclude any other party is somehow a reality not worth worrying over. One is sophisticated in accepting this breach of democracy, naïve in speaking out against it.

"Gradual change not radical change" more accurately applies to the race between Gore and Bush than it does to that between Gore and Nader. It is true that Bush is more radical than Gore, that is, Bush will more violently exacerbate our wounds and the wounds we inflict on other countries. Bush will bring about a quicker and more complete exploitation of the Third World abroad and at home. Gore, on the other hand, will allow for a more gradual degradation than Bush, for the Democrats have a moderate approach to exploitation and discrimination.

The GOP's Contract with America

From WIP News Service
May 1995

Newt Gingrich's right-wing plans in Congress amount to a massive transfer of wealth from poor and working people to the rich. The goal of his "Contract with America" is to push U.S. society back before the New Deal.

Before union rights. Before unemployment insurance and the minimum wage. Before public assistance and Social Security. Before the civil rights movement. Before the women's movement. Before Stonewall. Before most of the gains won over the last 60 years.

"The items in the contract had to be doable, and they had to be things that would have resonance with the American people," says Rep. Bill Paxon, who is chair of the National Republican Congressional committee. "That's why school prayer and other items were left out. Teams put the proposed legislation together, but Newt made the decisions."

Gingrich wanted to propose an agenda guaranteed to succeed. That's why, as Paxon points out, the most interesting items in the contract are the ones that are missing: school prayer; a constitutional amendment banning abortion; a federal version of California's Proposition 187; vouchers for home schooling or parochial schools; a flat tax; repealing affirmative action; gutting the Brady Law and the ban on assault weapons; not reauthorizing the Safe Drinking Water Act, Superfund program, Clean Air Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act.

Yet these missing items are the Republicans' real agenda, the ones they will test after the House finishes with the contract.

GOP pollster Frank Luntz tested the components of the contract before focus groups. Only those provisions that scored a favorability rating of 60 percent or higher made it into the contract. In other words, Republicans know the items they will be voting on in the first 100 days of Congress have already been embraced by the public.

Patriotism run amok

By Eric Chase
December 2001

Since that time, local papers have been flooded with editorial comments referring to Afghanis as "sub-humans" and "the enemy". Equally troubling is equating of demonstrators against the war as being terrorists themselves and the increasing "red baiting" going on against professors and students of The Evergreen State College. Opinion pieces claiming the protest was organized by "...leftist teachers... spewing forth the benefits of socialism", and encouraged the governor to close down the college of "gutless traitors", "grinning buffoon[s]", and "Stalinist bagmen".

Even more disturbing are the accounts of continual harassment and "in your face" patriotism. Workers at a local feed store were informed by management to not talk about political issues when customers were in the store. Apparently a longtime customer had overheard a discussion between workers against the war and was so offended that he swore he would never shop there again and would make a concerted effort to get others to stop shopping there. When a counter person at the local farmer's market politely refused to wear a red, white and blue ribbon, the person encouraging people to wear the ribbons walked through the open air market telling others of the clerk's refusal. The clerk was soon surrounded by other workers and customers in the area who harassed her. A young woman who worked at a downtown seafood restaurant also refused to wear an American flag and was harassed by the manager. When she maintained her position and suggested that the workers needed a union to protect themselves from harassment, she was fired.

More and more workers are reporting that their places of business have been visited by people asking "Where is your American flag?" or "Why aren't you playing patriotic music?" Memories of Patriotic Clubs and Loyalty Brigades who visited homes and businesses in the Red Scares of the 1890's, 1920's and the 1950's are getting some folks worried.

Looking beyond the election

By Glen Anderson
December 2004

People are still processing their feelings about the November election and wondering what to do next.

While many people thought defeating Bush was possible, I did not believe that a regime that had been demonstrating utter contempt for the truth, the Constitution, and international law for four years would allow a fair election to occur and accede to the wishes of the public. It is quite likely that the Republicans have stolen another election by suppressing Democratic votes, rigging the computerized voting machines, and other skullduggery. Abundant evidence was mounting throughout the campaign and continues to amass now.

Everyone who cares about democracy and constitutional government needs to make the 2004 election scandal a hot issue and keep it on the front burner. Suspicions and conjecture can point to areas for serious investigation, but ultimately, only hard evidence - the proverbial "smoking gun" - will convince the public and our political system to right the wrong. Remember that the Watergate burglary occurred in June 1972, but Nixon was not forced out of office until August 1974.

Defeating Bush on November 2 would not have been enough. We can't just replace one politician with another. We must change the political climate and culture in more profound ways. This requires not just an electoral campaign, but a vigorous social/political change movement.

Political parties and candidates avoid addressing the *real* issues. To make progress on the issues, we must raise the issues proactively and organize on them explicitly. When the people lead, the "leaders" will have to follow.

Smith vs Unsoeld

By Curt Pavola
November 1994

State Senator Linda Smith would discard the progressive policies that Congresswoman Jolene Unsoeld and the Democratic majority have enacted. Smith has voted against school breakfast and lunch programs, against the minimum wage, against family and medical leave, and against civil rights issues of all kinds. She entered politics, she admits, solely to make abortion illegal in Washington State.

Even before the final votes were tallied in her write-in primary election bid, Linda Smith flew to Washington, D.C., to join the national Republican leadership in signing their "Contract with America," which is nothing more than warmed-over 1980's policies that granted tax cuts to the wealthy, gutted social programs, and launched the budget deficit into its current orbit.

Jolene has consistently supported civil rights for all people, including the controversial issues of non-discrimination legislation for gay men and lesbians and the right to keep and bear arms. The latter has gotten her in hot water with many progressive voters, most of whom probably don't know that before Jolene's "no" vote on the crime bill this year – a vote motivated equally by the Second Amendment, inadequate provisions for racial justice, and the creation of 60 new federal crimes punishable by death sentence – she voted in favor of a budget that upgrades the Brady Bill's instant check provisions, increases funding for community policing, provides new money for drug courts, and establishes a new program to help stem violence against women.

On any issue, by any measure, Jolene Unsoeld is leagues beyond the reactionary malcontent Smith. Thurston County Republican Party Chairwoman Fiona Buzzard demonstrated perhaps the quintessential response to Smith's candidacy by resigning her post and launching a caustic attack against the "prickly," "anti-woman" candidate.

No democracy in Olympia

By Robert R. Ross
August 2003

For all intents and purposes, the proposed arts and conference center has already been built. The City Council is bound and determined to ignore its constituency and go ahead with the estimated $15 million project. However, opponents of the center are equally determined to disregard their elected officials, bringing the project to a halt using a variety of guerilla tactics ranging from lawsuits to grassroots democracy.

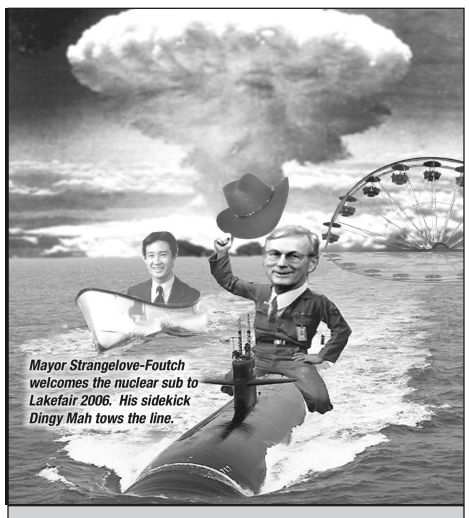
Overwhelming sentiment within the community is not wholly opposed to the arts and conference center, but antipathies arise over the Council's disregard for public opinion and their closed-door proceedings. Depending on whom you listen to, the conference center will either benefit the community or bankrupt it.

Advocates argue the project will increase the flow of commerce into the downtown area, stimulate and enrich the artistic community, while also providing much needed parking.

Detractors of the planned center conversely argue such a project will drain needed resources from Olympia's public services (police, teachers, etc.), benefiting only the private investors selling the idea to the Council. Another reason many are opposed to the center seems to be a general lack of democracy within the City Council, not to mention its unwillingness to cooperate with the public.

It would be a wonderful display of representative democracy for the Council to bring the matter to a public vote, but that isn't likely to happen.

Olympia City Council member TJ Johnson, during public hearings on police brutality at the Port of Olympia protests - Photo by Berd Whitlock, November 2007



Mayor Mark Foutch and then-City Council member Doug Mah unwittingly grace the cover of the Sep 2005 WIP

Letter to the activist community

By outgoing Olympia Mayor Mark Foutch
January 2008

Reading the December *Works in Progress*, I was struck by how many writers completely miss the connection between actions by previous Olympia councils, initiated and supported by the progressive activist community, and how those actions have influenced the past two council elections, with results the same activists now complain about.

In the 2005 campaign, council candidates encountered [the public's] anger while doorbelling. Voters that year elected new councilmembers that the activist community bemoaned as "conservative." But they failed to make the connection as to what had motivated the voters, and the candidates. And so, as the 2007 campaigns heated up, local activists came to the council with another proposal [for the City Council to prohibit the Navy from bringing ships to LakeFair] guaranteed to outrage those same voters yet again. They didn't realize it, but their timing couldn't have been worse—or better, depending on which side you were on.

That spectacle became the nail in the political coffin for any candidate known or even suspected to be supportive of bans on subs or ships or the ineffective Nuclear Free Zone ordinance. The voters sent in their ballots with that fresh in their minds. And now activist writers in *Works in Progress*, and I imagine in the many blogs that float around the community, are bemoaning the so-called "conservative" candidates just elected to the Olympia City Council. But they admit no responsibility for their own earlier insistence on ill-advised council actions that prompted this backlash by the voters.

If there are lessons to be learned from all this, I doubt if the activist community is ready to accept them. But in my humble opinion, in order to accomplish its broader goals, any local elected body has to be very careful not to spend its precious political capital for no real gain. We are very fortunate to have voters here who seem to be able, so far, to separate gratuitous council actions that sometimes disappoint or even outrage them, from the need to support City projects and programs that will maintain and improve the quality of life. But we can't continue to take that support for granted.

This is an excerpted version of Mark Foutch's letter to the activist community, printed in the January 2008 Works In Progress. *The unedited version is available at www.olywip.org/20_years .*

Isthmus be a joke!

By Janet Blanding
December 2008

"It ain't over until it's paved over," declared Bonnie Jacobs of Friends of the Waterfront at a recent citizens forum to save the isthmus. Though it was a warm, sunny Saturday morning, the Columbia room in the Capitol basement was filled to capacity, standing room only. Event organizers made several trips to the cafeteria to retrieve more chairs to accommodate the nearly 180 people who wanted to know what could be done to stop the unpopular proposed rezone of the isthmus.

Both the Friends of the Waterfront and the Capitol Park Foundation have formed legal committees which are planning to fight the [isthmus] rezone legally if the city council adopts the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment Ordinance, which it will most likely do at the December 16 council meeting. The two groups and their legal committees are working together amicably, as they have to date, although they may approach similar legal problems from slightly different angles. Both groups have attorneys and legal researchers working pro bono, yet Curtz acknowledged that there will most likely be legal costs that will need to be covered by fundraising. The groups fighting to preserve the isthmus will most likely have to appeal to concerned members of the public for funds to legally block this unpopular project. He observed wryly that Olympia taxpayers will be picking up the tab for the city's legal costs as well. Some audience members expressed frustration that they will be paying for both sides of a legal battle to fight something that the majority of the public has clearly expressed they do not want.

Many of the people at the forum also voiced discontent with the unwillingness of the city council to respond, or even listen to them. Apparently, email messages which had the word "isthmus" in the subject line were returned unread. The public comment period was closed, and the feelings of the public are being treated as an unnecessary nuisance.

Mayor Biles manufactures consent

By Pat Tassoni
May 2002

As many of you know, the Olympia city council has recently proposed a number of ordinances targeting the poor in our community. These ordinances include a ban on camping, a ban on car camping, a trespassing ordinance that would allow the police to bar an individual from entry to public parks for up to two months, a no panhandling zone and a no sale of fortified wine zone. The city claims it is responding to complaints from "business" as presented by the Olympia Downtown [business] Association.

For six months as this was taking form there was no public input into the process. Then the city held a Community Conversation on it and the overwhelming response from the public participants was to deal with the underlying issues of poverty rather than criminalizing homelessness.

Then Mayor [Stan] Biles decided to ignore the public input and push the ordinances as the solution in an audacious Editorial in the *Olympian*, thereby throwing all the public testimony into the trash. And he has garnered support with Letters to the Editor suggesting we euthanize the homeless or send them on a busride to nowhere. Biles has the gall to call that "the Olympia Way"!

This escalation on Biles' part, by cutting off public input and reasonable dialogue, and the rest of the city council's passive silence on it has prompted ordinance opponents to take creative steps to further the debate, much to the dismay of the Olympia Police.

During the Friday ArtsWalk, Olympia police officers Bakala and Costello cited three activists who were legally exercising their freedom of speech by hanging up posters in clear violation of the "Commercial" Bill Posting ordinance.

The police targeted the activists because of the content of their poster which stimulated further community conversation about downtown safety issues. The police wanted to follow through with what they saw as a mandate set by Biles to end the discussion; and by citing activists they effectively shut down public dialogue on the ordinances and the poverty issues it touches on at a time when it was most important to dialogue with the thousands of people that came downtown for ArtsWalk and who felt safe there despite the Mayor's, the city's and the ODA's recent campaign to portray downtown as unsafe.

The biggest t-shirt craze to hit Olympia since "Lacey sucks" - Photo by Janet Blanding, November 2008

Happy Isthmus
The war is over

By Janine Gates
February 2010

Community members packed into the city council chamber on January 5th for the council's first meeting of the year, and not only witnessed the swearing in of newly elected councilmembers Stephen Buxbaum, Karen Rogers, Jeannine Roe along with Joe Hyer (re-elected), but also witnessed a democratically choreographed coup of sorts.

After public comment by 14 citizens and other business, councilmembers Buxbaum, Rogers and Roe led the effort to begin reversing the efforts of the previous council regarding the fate of the controversial isthmus area in downtown Olympia.

With three stunning motions, which all passed, the newly reconstituted council accomplished more for many citizen activists in one meeting than in a whole year of trying to work with the previous council on isthmus-related issues.

Condominiums galore! This is what Olympia would look like if outside developers had their way - From the Triway Enterprises website

ODA attacks graffiti

By Pat Tassoni
April 1999

The latest step in the Olympia Downtown Association's plan to clean up the area and purge the downtown of what they consider undesirable elements (homeless and youth) has been unveiled lately. The ODA, in conjunction with the city, mandated that local businesses not allow art on their walls. This is part of a "beautify Olympia" campaign, where the ODA has unilaterally declared the city to be a "graffiti-free zone." Previously, local businesses had the option of whether or not to allow street art, or "Graffiti" to remain on the outer walls of their businesses on "Free Walls." At the end of March, the free walls in Olympia, located in the alleys of Thekla, the Arrowspace, and the Midnight Sun, were painted over to remain blank.

The Lacey example?

By Marco Rosaire Rossi
December 2006

Despite all the rhetoric about the dangers of Olympia, comparatively speaking, has a very low violent crime rate. According to FBI figures for 2004, Olympia experienced 333 violent crimes per every 100,000 persons. This is low for both state and national figures. Olympia had 258 violent crimes per every 100,000 persons while Lacey had 272 violent crimes per every 100,000 persons.

This evidence makes clear that the so-called "public safety crisis" is unfounded. The myth persists and is seriously debated only because of an intense class-bias against the poor and homeless. People with this bias automatically assume that if the homeless or street vagabonds are hanging out together then they must be "up to no good," or if a person is engaging in anti-social behavior downtown, that person must be homeless.

Development at the Westside Center

By Dan Leahy
January 1992

War is not healthy for Children and Other Living Things.

I liked the idea that a small business could put up such a sign and not have to worry about going out of business. I liked my neighbors who kept it there. I liked my kids walking by it. I liked driving by it – it made me pay attention when I saw another sign. It was on the window of Peterson's Shoprite. It said come to a meeting at Garfield School on Wednesday, December 4th to talk about saving the Westside Shopping Center.

I was glad to see that sign. I'd been hearing things and noticing stuff for months, but until that sign no one had asked me to stop and do something about it.

I mean, why did At Home with Books move across Division? Why is Olympic Drug closing? Is Peterson's being replaced by an Albertson's? Is the City Council really going to let a Jack in the Box be built at Harrison and Division? Is the Asterisk closing when their lease expires at the end of December? Why did the Graphia owner say he would never sign another lease with this landlord?

There were about 50 people at the Garfield meeting December 4th and just about as many questions. Here's some answers.

Lou Vogel of At Home with Books said she was forced out by the new landlord who raised her rent twice, and presented her with a 75 page new lease agreement calling for such things as a $97/month "maul" fee and the right to move her store anywhere within the Center with a two month notice.

Larry Peterson of Shoprite said he had signed a new five year lease with the landlord, but the landlord retained an option to buy out Peterson's within the first two years of the lease. It is this purchase option provision combined with the Olympic Drug vacancy and the landlord's inquiries about property behind Shoprite (across Garfield) that has fueled speculation about a giant car magnet such as Albertsons.

Dave Baxter of Rainy Day said, yes, Foodmaker Inc. of San Diego had filed an application with the City Council to build a Jack in the Box on the northwest corner of Harrison and Division. The City Council determined that such a development was of "non-significance" and therefore no EIS study (Environmental Impact Statement) was required. Apparently, the City Council only notifies property owners within 300 feet of such an intended use. Since neither Dave nor the other tenants own property within that 300 ft, they received no notice of appeal rights to this determination of "non-significance."

There was one question, however, we didn't get a clear answer to. Who is this landlord, what's his plan for our neighborhood business center and who are his allies?

Harmen [Verbrugge]'s most recent "development" landed in Federal Bankruptcy court in Tacoma. On July 23, 1990, as our Secretary of State dissolved Harmen's Nomen Corporation for failure to file office and renew his license, he moved on his father's Olympia Westside property through his Treco Corporation.

His plan is quite simple. Create empty space by driving local businesses out with rent increases and maintaining vacancies. Attract an Albertsons with his empty space, his asphalt, and his true bona fide – a Jack in the Box that will guarantee traffic and shoppers. File bankruptcy and go further south if it doesn't work out.

Harmen's plans were sailing along until Diane Hogland and Friends of the Westside Center started collecting signatures on a petition asking the City Council to downzone the Center to "neighborhood retail" (appropriate to a residential area) and support a moratorium on further development until the downzone is implemented.

Making Olympia attractive for developers

From WIP News Service
May 2008

Judging from the work being done by the new City Council, in place since January 2008, it would appear that their vision looks a lot like Bellevue. The City is spending municipal funds to promote the interests of developers who intend to construct high-end condos downtown, while withdrawing funding from the Tenants Union -- so perhaps in their vision, downtown is populated only by the propertied class. Judging from the Council's willingness to ease the way for a re-zone of the isthmus between Capital Lake and Budd Bay, views of the Sound and Olympic Mountains are not part of the vision; the proposal for the isthmus would allow high-rise mixed use structures that would destroy views that have been protected by the existing zoning for decades.

This is a vision without much sound: The City is eager to pass a noise ordinance that will decimate the downtown music scene, so that future residents of the area will be able to enjoy their fancy condos in peace and quiet… almost as if they're in the suburbs. Many of the local musicians who play – in essence, work – in downtown Olympia, feel that the City Council has virtually declared war on downtown's culture with this noise ordinance.

Concerns have arisen that the OPD will be able to use the ordinance as a blunt instrument, selectively enforced to suit the whims of police. Since most anyone having a conversation on the sidewalk after 10 p.m. will be in violation of the ordinance, it has a huge potential for misuse, and could serve as a way of further limiting the use of public space.

Renters are dismayed that their interests seem to be of such little interest to the same council that blithely allocated $50,000 to pay a consultant to create graphics showing what the isthmus would look like with condos on it and is planning to spend nearly half a million dollars to plant trees on Legion Way. Downtown resident and renter Jason Taellious remarked, "Cutting funding of the Tenants Union sends a really bad message …The less you keep people informed, the easier it is to control them. These are the same people – downtown residents – that the city council says they're trying to protect with the noise ordinance."

It is also likely that the Free School will not benefit from this sort of development; in fact, it is dubious whether it and many other downtown businesses and organizations -- many of which are barely making ends meet as it is -- will survive the rent increases that may result as developers come in and change the character of downtown Olympia to match the city council's vision.

"I am not opposed to new housing downtown but not if it comes at the expense of downtown's character." Taellious expresses a feeling voiced by many "It seems like it's a top down thing, rather than from the people. This is something that is being forced on downtown based on somebody's vision, rather than it coming from the collective vision."

The hidden agenda of the Olympia

From WIP News Service
November 1995

The City of Olympia has been working with the Olympia Police Department to draft several city ordinances which are directly meant to target the homeless community in this area. Similar ordinances have already been passed in SF, NYC, LA, Seattle and Santa Cruz.

The three major ordinances:

1) No Car Camping

The Olympia City Council attempted to pass this ordinance a few months back. Its main focus was to keep poor people from sleeping in their vehicles in the downtown area. The ordinance would make an exception during Lakefair and possibly for people who owned motor homes. Despite overwhelming opposition at the public hearing, the City Council announced that they had already decided to pass it, but that it would be tabled at this time for further amendments.

2) No panhandling

(Similar to San Francisco and NYC.)

3) No sitting in "business districts"

Olympia already has this ordinance written up. The Olympia City Council is awaiting the outcome of a civil suit which was slapped on Seattle for passing a similar ordinance. If the ordinance is found constitutional in Seattle, Olympia plans to pass a similar one here. (Santa Cruz has a similar ordinance.)

OPD raids encampments

Several peaceful encampments were raided over the last year, especially during the winter when homeless people were seeking warm shelter.

1) A homeless encampment near Capitol Lake was raided. According to one homeless person involved, there were at least 8 police officers present with guns drawn and several homeless people were physically assaulted by the officers. The people were only trying to find a safe place to sleep.

2) A house on Devoe Street near Puget Power was busted and at least three people were arrested for criminal trespassing.

3) An abandoned house on Franklin Street was raided on the suspicion of drug activities. Although no drugs were found, the OPD broke up the squat.

4) A treehouse near the railroad tracks where four homeless people were living was broken up by the OPD.

5) Some homeless people were arrested for criminal trespass when they squatted in the Chowder Bar downtown.

6) The Glass House on 7th and Eastside was boarded up shortly after eviction notices went up.

East end of downtown

The Olympia City Council and East End businesses are making plans to "clean up" and revamp this business district to boost the economy. They are targeting homeless people and specifically Bread and Roses, claiming it is a threat to public safety and one of the major reasons the businesses in this area cannot survive. They seem to believe that if the city can remove the so-called "visible and hard-core" homeless people from this area, their financial problems will be solved. The OPD has asked B&R to collaborate with them to identify and refuse services to homeless people with criminal records; since B&R refuses to do this, then the pubic safety is (allegedly) in danger. Other tactics include changing locations and times of meals served to the homeless so that the homeless population is not visible to the public during business hours and asking B&R to allow smoking inside in the hopes that the homeless will all stay indoors. Out of sight, out of mind!

An East End Downtown meeting was held on Oct. 23 at the First Interstate Bank on Franklin. In attendance were Ken Black from the city, the OPD, concerned persons, and businesses. The purpose of the meeting was to develop strategies for revitalizing the East End. The main obstacle seemed to be Bread & Roses.

The fear surrounding B&R was confirmed and legitimized by the OPD, who cited unsubstantiated statistics of the increase in calls received from the East End. Of course, the unstated causal factor is: "because of Bread & Roses." According to a B&R member, they were asked to call the OPD. Now that is returning, and being used against them.

One suggestion to revitalizing the East End was to decentralize the services for the homeless. It was mentioned that B&R should be moved near the Salvation Army. Not really a solution for decentralizing, but it gets B&R out of the downtown core. B&R has always been willing to move provided the site is accessible. No definite strategies were acted upon at the meeting.

Fleetwood Center opens

By Frank Hoffman
September 1997

The Fleetwood, permanent housing for formerly homeless people, will open this month in downtown Olympia. Housing activists have struggled for years with various levels of local and state government to create transitional and permanent housing for people who have no place to live except on a friend's floor, the woods, or under the 4th Avenue bridge.

In 1992, the City Council made those bridges off limits to the homeless. Thus, the struggle by those displaced homeless people and others, that resulted in the opening of the Fleetwood this month, began.

Why are we so afraid of the homeless? There's no mystery about being homeless. If you don't have the money to rent a place - any place - you're no place; you're homeless. And you are still who you were when you had a place to call your own, no matter how modest that place was or how grand. Being homeless isn't a state of mind or a metaphysical condition. It has to do with a roof and four walls, a door to close, a window to open, an address, a chair, a bed, a table, a phone and a place to welcome your friends.

As a society, we seem to be in the middle of another paroxysm of blaming the poor for the way our political economy works. The news media trumpet that the economy is strong, that both inflation and unemployment are down and corporate profits are up.

City Council

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is the only men's shelter in Olympia. They are a multinational business making money off of the homeless epidemic. They give people 10 days to find a job or get on state assistance. When people fail to produce an income in this impossible amount of time, they are put on permanent denial from any and all services offered by Sallies including shelter, bus passes and meals. The Salvation Army is the major opponent to ideas of creating another shelter in this town. They claim that their shelter is never full, there are always empty beds available. This is because they have such a long denial list. Sallies only address a very small percentage of the homeless population because they refuse to work with people with substance abuse problems, the mentally ill, elderly, etc. People who would be very difficult to quickly reenter into mainstream society are further alienated and discriminated against by the Salvation Army.

There is no emergency shelter for men in this town during the winter months, and many men are on the permanent denial list at Salvation Army. Gary Back, a 61 year old homeless man was found dead Oct. 6. He had been sleeping in the parking lot of a car rental business across the street from the Salvation Army homeless shelter. The temperatures dipped down to 46° that night.

According to the County Coroner, Gary Back died of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease complicated with alcohol abuse. When asked if the 46 degree temperature would aggravate such a condition, the person with the Coroner did not rule it entirely out, but did suggest that the many layers of clothes Gary was wearing would have protected him from the "chilly" weather.

Would Gary have died that night regardless of the temperature? Would he have died wrapped in blankets too, as he did in multiple layers of clothes? Would he have died even if he was sleeping in a bed rather than in a parking lot? Would he have died under the shelter of a roof as surely as he died under the shelter of a car? How many more will we let die and then dismiss as part of their condition or as a part of their history?

For these reasons, we feel strongly that Olympia needs to take action against this crackdown on homeless people by the City of Olympia. Homes, not jails!

Prosecutor attacks homeless

By Greg Hohnholt
August 1995

An unknown Thurston County prosecuting attorney stole a copy of a *Real Change* newspaper from Michael J. Campbell, a homeless man, on May 30 in front of the Thurston County Courthouse. When confronted by Campbell, the attorney argued that the paper only required a donation, and that he was not bound to pay the standard one dollar asking price. A heated exchange followed, prompting Thurston County sheriffs to restrain Campbell and search him. After discovering a small pipe, Campbell was arrested and taken into custody.

Campbell spent three days in jail and was released. The attorney, on the other hand, was let off scot-free, and never paid Campbell for his newspaper.

Most would agree that this attorney's behavior is a disgrace to his profession, but it illustrates, I believe, a very vital truth about the overclass' perceptions of the poor. No matter how much they say they want the homeless to take responsibility for their own lives, no matter how much they say they "feel their frustration with their inability to pull their own lives back together," or "understand their plight," their first impulse, when push comes to shove, is to react out of unconscious fear and divisiveness.

By Letitia Flynt
March 1994

The most enjoyable part of the entire conference for me was when SCHEM members and our friends from the Seattle homeless community marched into the panel discussion entitled "Public Policy Towards Homelessness: How Can We Help the Homeless?" on February 1st. Most of the Seattle group were there to protest the fact that Seattle City Attorney Mark Sidran, whose recently passed laws prohibiting the homeless from panhandling or even sitting on sidewalks, was a panelist in this discussion. During the public part of the forum, many of the Seattle group spoke out, both eloquently and angrily, against these laws, which propose to "lock them [the homeless] up" (after all, they're either criminals, mentally ill, or drunk).

Local needle exchange

By Carol Poole
July 1993

Thurston County's first and only needle exchange program for injection drug users began about a year ago as an unofficial effort of a few persistent volunteers. The Olympia AIDS Prevention Project (OAPP) runs a needle exchange program in Olympia modeled after Tacoma's successful Point Defiance AIDS Project's needle exchange. OAPP staff give new needles in exchange, one for one, for used ones, thus providing users with the means to protect themselves against HIV, which spreads rapidly when needles are shared. OAPP staff also provide general education about AIDS prevention.

Needle exchange programs are relatively new in the fight against AIDS, and controversial. No one disputes the facts: sharing needles means sharing HIV, and new needles are safer than reused ones (even when rinsed with bleach, as the county Health Department recommends). HIV seropositivity rates among injection drug users in Tacoma have remained low, around 4%; without the needle exchange program, rates over 50% might be expected, based on the pattern of HIV infection among injection drug users and their sexual partners in cities without needle exchanges. Also, new needles cause less damage to the veins and skin than blunt, used needles. OAPP staff point out that another advantage of a needle exchange program is that relationships can develop between outreach workers and clients over time.

State and federal law prohibit the distribution of "drug paraphernalia," including syringes for private use. However, the state Supreme Court found in a 1992 decision that needle exchange programs to prevent the spread of HIV are legal.

Thurston County tells homeless to go away

By Pat Tassoni
April 1997

Recently, a Thurston County Crisis Clinic flier suggested homeless people leave the county as an option for getting shelter assistance. The flier claims, "Thurston County has very limited emergency shelter."

It goes on to read:

"Can you leave the county? There are more shelters available in the Tacoma and Seattle areas...

"Can you get creative? Is camping an option? Can your children stay with a friend, relative, or temporary foster care?"

When Vista-volunteer Kory Wilder got a peek at the flier on March 17th, as it was presented to the Housing Task Force meeting, she called it an embarrassment to the county and walked out. The Task Force members defended and endorsed it and mass production of the flyer got underway.

Little needs to be said to express the callous attitude of the county when it suggests homeless people camp during record rains and floods, or to suggest they break up their families as an option. A more direct approach for the Crisis Clinic and Emergency Housing Network would be for them to just say: "Go away, however it takes, because everything we do is going to reflect that we don't want to help."

Local activists think the flier accurately addresses the county's sentiment towards dealing with homelessness as demonstrated in the past. When forced to acknowledge a "problem," they quickly and consistently try to minimize it and push it away. Now they have actually put that into writing. The Crisis Clinic has taken the flier wording under advisement – although will they / can they do the same with their sentiments?

Dedicated to Long Hair David

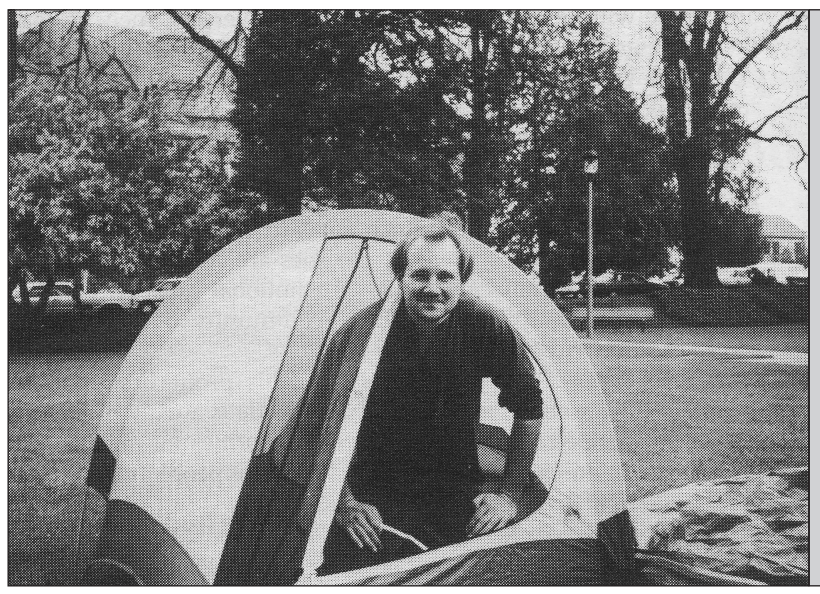
By Nomy Lamm
August 2005

[Editor's note: This testimonial was provided after longtime Olympia activist Long Hair David was attacked by Olympia police in Sylvester Park. The police fabricated a story where David, a man of peace, allegedly attacked them, in an attempt to justify their brutality. If convicted, it would have been David's "third strike".]

The work of Long Hair David changed my life and the lives of many, probably more people than can be accounted for. To say such a thing, in the current age of political and social suspicion, feels like waving my arms in the face of an attack dog, going "Hey, right here!" But I have to. Dave could go to prison for life. He has paid more than his own debt already. He is needed in the world.

I am lucky to have never actually lived on the streets, but I spent a lot of time on them, participating and creating culture. At every point, Dave was there with a project that was both necessary and accessible. It had been many years since Dave himself was homeless, or incarcerated, or on drugs, yet he served those communities with humility and enthusiasm, dedicating his whole heart and spirit to his work. He runs projects that provide safer-sex materials to youth, clean needles to drug users, books to prisoners, socks and toothbrushes to homeless people, because he knows from experience what is needed -- life-saving information, resources and maybe one person in the world who knows and cares what you're going through.

As much as his services are needed in the world, his sense of purpose inspires people like myself to take action when we care about something. Please don't take that light out of the world.



A homeless man cleans out his tent at the Sylvester Park homeless encampment in April 1994 - Photo by Jennifer Minich

The first days of Camp Quixote

By Ray Kavick
March 2007

The first tents were awkwardly set up with the people at the campsite looking over their shoulders every once in a while. I felt that many of us were waiting for the police to come immediately. During the planning meetings, it was assumed by nearly everybody that we would be at the site for an hour at most. When the first five tents went up and an hour had passed, none of us were completely sure what to do. But that soon passed, the group got together and we decided to go ahead and put as many tents and as many people on the site as quickly as possible.

A local group called the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace held sit-ins at two locations that day protesting the laws that the city passed banning sitting, panhandling or performing on Olympia sidewalks. Once it was over, many of them came down and hung out with us. People passing by stopped to see what was going on. The energy was beginning to grow in the small, gravel-and-mud parking lot. The tents continued to be erected, we made a few pallet runs in order to get the tents off the ground, different musicians came by and played for us and random people dropped off food. A port-a-potty arrived by truck later in the day. The cops were nowhere to be seen.

By nightfall, the group was operating smoothly and the unity we had talked about and hoped for in the meetings was materializing. Once the fear of the police had subsided, we all threw ourselves headlong into the undertaking and the sense of excitement among the group gave us all a small, constant buzz. We were no longer doing something "illegal," we were doing what we needed to do. If something needed to be taken care of, people got up and did it. Whenever someone needed something, we gave it to them, or tried to. At the end of that day, the hope I had for the encampment multiplied exponentially.

The next day, in our local newspaper, we were on the cover. *The Olympian* was telling everyone that we set up the camp to "protest" the new laws. While all of us despised the laws, we did not do this to "protest" anything. We did this to create what we needed: housing and a sense of community. But it was easier for the *Olympian* to label us as "protesters," something they are still doing.

Local brutality in a national context

By Brother Earth
December 1995

All allegations against corrupt police were confirmed and legitimated to the mass of citizens by the confession of a Los Angeles Police Detective by the name of Mark Fuhrman. His confessions ranged from falsifying police reports to physically beating Hispanic citizens. His reward for this attitude was a promotion to Detective and a transfer to another section of town to practice and perfect his racist attacks.

Olympia's own Mark Fuhrman, Detective Fred Doughty is widely regarded as a racist and a bully with a badge and gun, who demonstrates his hatred of people who do not look and act as he does. Det. Doughty is backed by his superiors, including Chief John Wurner, a former Los Angeles County Police Officer.

I have found that Det. Doughty feels that homeless people are less than human, and that the way to deal with them is to humiliate them until they leave his perfect town. On the Jim Gillette Show in Jan. 1995 (Capitol Conference), he said that people from outside his town were not welcome here to infringe on what he feels is right or wrong, even if he has to step on the rights of citizens.

If you have a problem believing this, try talking to the youth of Olympia who are being victimized. He said he can tell a gang member just by looking at them, and he immediately attacks.

This type of history has contributed to the label for the police as the "New Untouchables," above the law. Individual events may be explained away as coincidence, and individual officers may be explained away as rogues. But if such occurences and individuals are commonplace, it may indicate wide-spread corruption.

Curbside photos

By Emma Hendrickson
April 1994

Local police have been taking pictures of teenagers on the streets to create individual gang files. Two teens approached me in downtown Olympia to tell me that an Olympia police officer asked if he could take their pictures. Without thinking much about it, they said "yes." Afterwards they asked what he was going to do with the pictures and he told them he was going to use them to start their gang files. They were unable to convince him to change his intentions.

I have been hearing stories from Lacey area kids that the police there have not been so polite. They tell me that Lacey police do not generally ask for permission. They not only take pictures of the face, but of tattoos on various parts of the body: hands, arms, torso, back of the neck.

A young man to whom I spoke last fall shared a story of what kids are going through in this community. He had been in the gangs in high school and after a serious injury had decided he needed to get out. The police wouldn't believe him and continued to hound him, making this as difficult as possible. Later, when attending a workshop on gangs by a local police department, he looked up at the slideshow to see his face on the screen. There was a blue line across his eyes, but if someone knew him, he/she would certainly have recognized him, and this is a small town. If we really want young people to get out of gangs, it would make more sense to support them in their efforts.

Visit www.olywip.org/20_years ***for the independent investigations of the OPD killings of Danny Spencer, Stephen Edwards, and Jose Ramírez-Jiménez.***

Olympia cop forced to resign in disgrace

By Emma Hendrickson - April 1998

On March 9th, Detective Fred Doughty of the Olympia Police Department (OPD) was forced to resign for neglecting his duties while carrying on a romantic relationship with an Olympia businesswoman during his working hours. According to The Olympian, Commander Steve Nelson stated that the woman wanted to end the relationship and that Doughty "wouldn't leave her alone." The woman had contacted the OPD in early 1997 and again this last February. There was a no-contact order placed against Doughty on February 18th. Commenting on the situation, Commander Nelson said "It's a horrible thing because [Doughty] was a popular employee."

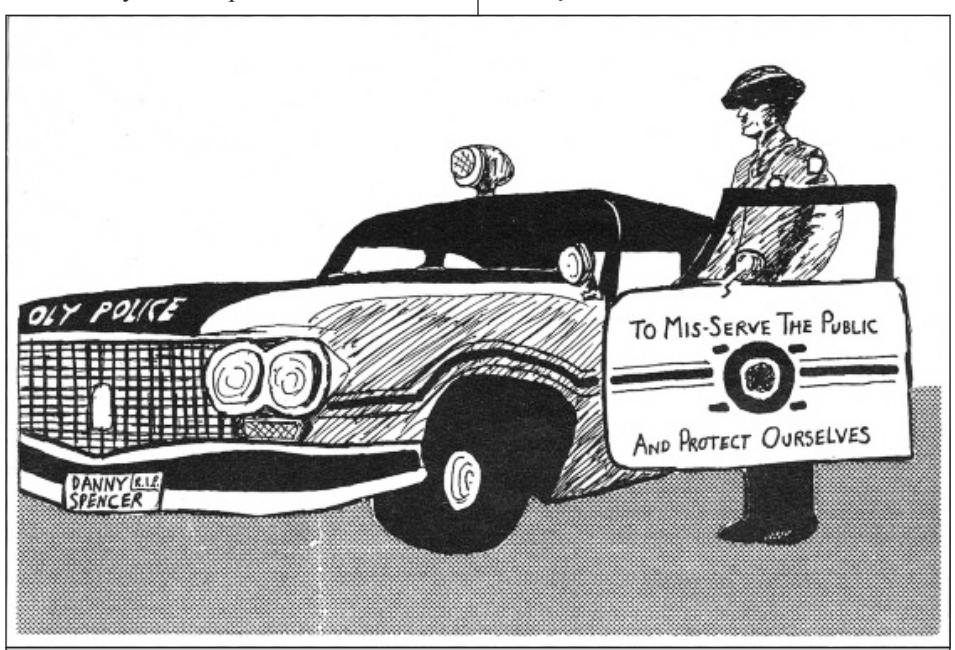
In the September 1995 issue of *Works In Progress* was a cover story describing the actions of Fred Doughty and the OPD against Ken Dean, a former west side resident. Officer Doughty was accused by Ken Dean of violating his constitutional rights as well as violating police procedure as implicated by police and court documents. Soon after the incident, Officer Doughty was presented with the award of "police officer of the year" and promoted to Detective.

By Wally Cuddeford
September 2007

Even public discourse (and therefore, public thought) is hampered by the threat of police retaliation. Many people rely on the police for services such as protection from violent exes, and are in a position where speaking out against police brutality (which they may oppose) would leave them vulnerable. Officers who challenge corrupt practices, like former Olympia police officer Ron Nesbitt, are fired and retaliated against for daring to challenge police power. Others are actively punished for speaking out against brutality.

All of this adds up to a paralyzing effect on public consciousness. People begin following unjust orders given by police, just because it was an officer who gave the order. People submit to illegal searches, and show ID when they don't have to. Police start [making] outrageous [claims] without being challenged. Worst of all, people who consider themselves well intentioned and defenders of others, actual good people, begin to turn their backs on the brutality inflicted on others.

While failing to submit can be a dangerous prospect for the individual, not standing up to police domination can be far more dangerous for our communities and for society.



Graphic originally printed in the September 1995 issue of WIP, by Chris Munson

Abducted by the Olympia Police

By David Lavender
August 2001

Growing up I was often told about freedom, and how lucky we are to live in a country that is free. On June 19th, I was able to experience that freedom firsthand, thanks to Officer Bob Krasnican, by being verbally harassed, and shackled to a chair. What crime was I accused of to warrant such action? Jaywalking. Ahhh...I know I feel safer on the streets now that jaywalkers will be kept off, with as much force as possible of course.

But there are some serious issues here. First off, I had three boys in my care at the time, and they were left downtown for hours with no regard for their safety. Second, I did not cross the street alone. There were three youth and a friend crossing with me. You might wonder why the officer only ticketed/harassed me. So did I. At least until I heard Krasnican himself admit that the jaywalking charge was an excuse to get to me. So again, what was my crime?

Around 2:30 pm, about a half hour before the incident, I entered Sylvester Park with the three boys. On our way to a bench, we passed with in six feet of two cops with two people handcuffed. This caught my attention and I looked as we walked by. One police officer made eye contact with me; I later found out that these were Bob Krasnican's eyes. Now back to the incident and the comment Bob made that enlightened me to his true intentions. While demanding my ID, he let out that he saw me taking an interest in him earlier, and that I should not have done that. When I tried to protest this clearly illegal action by the officer, he grabbed my arm and aggressively twisted it behind my back in some sort of special hold, and led me to the back of his car. The cop then again demanded my ID, and I responded as I had the whole time: for him to change his rude disposition, unhand me, and plainly treat me with respect. None of these requests were met; I was handcuffed, and taken to the police station. Again, let me reiterate that three youth were left downtown who were in my care. When this was told to the officer he showed little to no interest.

Now this is the first time in my life I have ever been handcuffed, put in the back of a police car, or in trouble with the law. When we arrived at the station I had another first: being shackled to a chair. This was mandatory, or at least I was told. Another thing I had to do was sign a piece of paper. Well, OK, let me read it first though. No. Officer Krasnican then informed me that if the paper doesn't get signed, I would be spending the night in jail and have to pay a $250 fine. More threats. Let freedom ring!

After an hour or so in jail, I was released. The cops refused my request for a ride back to where the boys were downtown. So I had to walk back. The whole incident took two and a half hours. Luckily the boys were alright as some friends at a local shop who saw the incident took them in.

Later on someone told me to contact councilwoman Jeanette Hawkins, for she has worked on police accountability issues in the past. I called her, and a meeting was set up between myself, the police chief, the boys and their father, and Pat Tassoni of Olympia CopWatch. At the meeting we told our story and I was hoping for some explanations or at least some understanding of how things should operate normally. I got neither. The police chief is either very unfamiliar with protocol or just did not want to talk to me. His favorite response to my questions was "I don't know." If he doesn't, then who does? I'm still trying to figure that one out.

The prison system -

By Sonja Sivesind
February 1998

In the US, over 1,227 people each week are committed to prison. Over 200 prisons are being constructed nationwide. In the state of California, the education budget is $4.7 billion and falling, while the money spent annually on jail and prisons is $5.2 billion and rising. Although news stories about violent crime have skyrocketed in recent years, actual cases of crime have not increased. The money lost by society because of white collar crime well exceeds the loss of all burglaries, car thefts, larcenies, and robberies combined.

African-American males make up six percent of the US population, yet nearly 50 percent of prisoners are African-American men. This is not because African-American men are more prone to commit crimes. After the Civil War, the 13th Amendment officially abolished slavery for everyone but those convicted of crime. This followed with a tremendous increase of African-American convicts. Standing in an area of town or walking at night became the criminal acts of "loitering," and "breaking curfew." Imprisoning African-Americans was a way to maintain the power, economic, and race relationships that had existed under slavery. Such institutionalized racism continues today. In the Federal prison system, sentences for African-Americans are 20 percent longer than those which whites receive for similar crimes.

Along with racism, economics plays a huge role in deciding who goes to prison and why crimes are committed. In 1990, 58 percent of the people in prison were unemployed at the time of arrest, and 68 percent earned less than $15,000 a year. Women are predominantly convicted of shoplifting, prostitution, or other economic crimes. In a 1978 study, the National Urban League claimed that the top priority of the federal government's agenda to deal with the crime problem should be a national policy of full employment. On top of all this, one study found that 53 percent of low-income de-

"Kinder, gentler" cops

By Bernadette Belfast
February 1991 "Special Peace Edition"

Scene: Olympia, downtown. The burgeoning anti-war movement is sponsoring a demonstration. The police block off the march route ahead of time and escort the demonstrators, acting as a buffer between the swelling mass of peace activists and scattered, flag-waving war advocates along the way. No Chicago '68 here, right? No riot gear cops with tear gas or National guardsmen shooting at college students. That was the last big war. Or was it?

On the night that the U.S. bombing of Iraq began, demonstrators in Eugene, OR, were tear-gassed. In New York City, cops on horseback trampled and beat a demonstration of high and middle school age students. On January 21, in Olympia, police attacked a demonstration, tackling one activist, and pulling a gun on another.

With the exception of these disturbing, underreported incidents, the police have generally been more cooperative with the movement this time around. What does it mean? Are there really devout pacifists, anti-imperialists, and radical revolutionaries beneath those blue uniforms? No. Cops more than likely attend our demonstrations, but never when they're off-duty.

This kinder, gentler approach of the police in the 1990s isn't out of sympathy to the cause. It's a well planned, tactical response to growing anti-war activities. It appears that the authorities have learned from their mistakes in attempting to suppress opposition to the Vietnam War. During Vietnam, police tried to destroy the movement through brutal methods of intimidation. Beating demonstrators, using tear gas, or even opening fire on people standing up for their rights were common tactics. Rather than scaring away activists, bumps, bruises, and bullets only strengthened their resolve by making the state's inhumane brutality a more personal experience.

- Exposing the myths

fendants received prison sentences compared to only 26 percent of high-income defendants.

As corporations attempt to privatize the prison industry, rehabilitation is placed lower and lower on the job description of the prison industry. When prisoners act as laborers for private companies, those companies want a full work day, eliminating the few programs designed to give the prisoner skills. This also acts as a blow against workers on the outside who lose their jobs to prisoners who are not allowed to organize and don't receive a minimum wage. These private interests would profit both from overcrowding and lengthy prison terms.

Another example of the horrid treatment of prisoners takes place with the severe physical and psychological abuse in the Maximum Security Prisons. These prisons use beatings, control units, mind games and solitary confinement. It is a myth that solitary confinement is used for only short periods of time. It is usually a period of months and most commonly years that prisoners are confined to what academic literature calls "the most individually destructive, psychologically crippling, and socially alienating experience that could conceivably exist within the borders of the country." (Rosenblatt)

The system as it exists is not even meeting the goals of the government. In 1991, 34.8 percent of prisoners who were released were rearrested for felony or serious misdemeanor within three years. There are no jobs for people when they get out. They have not been allowed education, skill training, or rehabilitation programs. Such intense violence has been used to break their spirits and individuality, that when released, they have few social skills and are unfamiliar with alternative methods to violence. The Minnesota Assistant Commissioner of Corrections even said, "We're in the business of tricking people into thinking that spending hundreds of millions [of dollars] for new prisons will make them safe."

The ICE facility: Families torn apart

By Caitlin McNulty
March 2010

A snide comment that stung a little too much. A careless shove, and some cussing. That's all it took to take Julio, a high school senior, honor roll student, football player and loving son, away from his family, his community, and possibly even his country. Instead of a week's suspension from school, and maybe a few hours of community service, Julio has been taken to the Northwest Detention Center, isolated in Tacoma. He is facing deportation to Mexico, a country he has not been to since he came to the United States at the age of two with his family. A country where he has nothing and no one to go back to.

I heard this story from Irmenia, Julio's mother. She and his father had driven from southern Oregon to see their son for the first time since he was detained two weeks earlier. But they had arrived five minutes after their scheduled visiting hours ended, and were told by a guard outside the prison's entrance to leave. In English. Translation wasn't available to tell the parents for a 17 year old boy that after a six hour drive they would not be able to see their child.

Irmenia's tears are the tears of a mother who is separated from her son, who knows he is behind the armed guards and barbed wire, already beyond her reach.

In many ways, Julio has already lost. Because he is undocumented, he does not have the right to a court appointed attorney. Even if his parents are able to afford a private attorney, the question will be whether or not he is documented. It will not take into account his success in school, participation in community activities, or his age when he crossed the border. Nor will the decision reflect how Julio's deportation would separate him from his family, his friends, his community, and his plans for the future.

John Towery

By Drew Hendricks
August 2009

"John Jacob" [Towery's assumed name] first became part of Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (PMR) meetings after we had challenged the movement of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry (Strykers) which moved out through the Port of Tacoma in March, 2007. This action on our part clearly signaled to Fort Lewis Force Protection personnel that we were intending to challenge their movements regardless of whether they used the Port of Olympia.

During the Fall and Winter of 2007, he continued to be a presence at meetings and never raised any further alarms in my own estimation.

From that time until June 2009 this spy for the US Army had complete access to the Oly PMR listserv membership list and could add and remove users. He did this on several occasions and generally was not found to abuse that power, except that he probably handed the list to his employer (the United States Army) periodically or used it in identifying and reporting on new users as they were placed on the list.

John Towery - Photo by PMR-INFO

Tookie Williams on death row

By Marco Rosaire Rossi
December 2005

Tookie's lawyers are currently trying to get another trial for him based on new evidence that puts the former forensic test in serious doubt. The California Supreme Court hasn't ruled on whether it will hear the case. Critics of the conviction have claimed that the witnesses who testified against Tookie were unreliable sources – including "a jailhouse snitch with a record of perjury." The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals stated in its 2002 ruling that some of the witnesses had "less than-clean backgrounds and incentives to lie in order to obtain leniency from the state in either charging or sentencing."

The prosecutor has been accused of utilizing racist strategies and stereotypes to get a conviction from the jury. All potential jurors who were black were removed from the trial during the jury selection. The prosecutor also compared Tookie to a "Bengal tiger" and insinuated that South Central Los Angeles was a jungle.

Olympians oppose the Patriot Act

By Howard Rosenfeld and Coral Spickler
Sep 2003

On Tuesday, August 19th, a newly formed coalition presented a draft resolution to the Olympia City Council in support of civil liberties and against the USA PATRIOT Act. City Council member Curt Pavola acted as the point person for the City of Olympia and has been working with organizers from the coalition. Coalition member Bruce DeLoria also met with Olympia Chief of Police to get his agency's input on the resolution. The Police Chief was receptive, and offered a few slight modifications to the resolution.

Spurred to action by the passage and aggressive use of the new powers in the USA Patriot Act, this group aims to include Olympia on the list of 157 communities that have passed resolutions against the new set of laws, which includes 3 state-wide resolutions (Vermont, Alaska and Hawaii).

With great haste and secrecy and in the name of the "war on terrorism," Congress passed legislation that gives the Executive Branch sweeping new powers that undermine the Bill of Rights and are unneccesary to keep us safe. A massive 342-pages in length, the USA PATRIOT Act was passed on October 26, 2001, with little debate by members of Congress, most of whom did not even read the bill. The administration then initiated a flurry of executive orders, regulations, and policies and practices that also threatened our rights.

The "Green Scare" hits Olympia

By Melissa Roberts
May 2006

It should come as no shock that the U.S. government has perfected the art of deception while simultaneously criminalizing dissent. The agenda is clear: the U.S. government intends to protect those with wealth and power, and will do so by any means necessary. The past year alone has revealed a campaign which includes: warrantless wiretapping; Presidential "signing statements" contradicting laws passed by Congress; and secretive "declassification" of information with intent to harm high-level dissenters. In short, those in power whose interests revolve around short-term profits at the expense of the long-term health of the planet and the majority of its inhabitants, are not to be hindered.

A recent example is the "Green Scare" -- a modern-day witch hunt of environmentalists reminiscent of the McCarthy-era "Red Scare". December 7th, 2005, marked the beginning of the largest roundup of environmental and animal rights activists in U.S. history. The FBI sting centered on incidents of sabotage allegedly committed by the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) primarily in the Pacific Northwest -- Eugene, Olympia, Seattle -- and extending to Colorado and California. Two Olympia activists have been arrested. Unfortunately, this is only the beginning of the campaign's impact on the Olympia community.

The nation-wide sweep of arrests, or "Operation Backfire," is part of an FBI campaign against environmentalists who engage in a variety of tactics -- including property destruction -- as a means to defend wild lands, animals, and the integrity of the earth's delicate balance. But here's the clincher: they've been dubbed "terrorists". In his campaign send-off, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales issued a January 2006 televised statement announcing a sweeping 65-count indictment which included conspiracy charges and declared "eco-terrorism" as "the number one domestic terrorist threat."

In 2008, Briana Waters, one of the local activists swept up in the green scare, was wrongly convicted of firebombing a UW laboratory. She is currently serving a six year prison term.

Olympia resident held at Guantanamo

By Tom Wright
February 2004

At first the government claimed that [James] Yee's search and arrest at the Florida air station arose from his own suspicious behavior. (He supposedly denied having luggage with him; his lawyer explained that at the time he was escorting a child from Cuba to the care of another adult in a different part of the airport, and he didn't have his luggage with him just then.) But the government later abandoned that pretense and admitted that FBI agents were already in waiting for him, having received a "tip" from the Army, which had put Yee under surveillance.

Yee and his lawyers argued that the materials he carried were just his own notes about prisoners he counseled, and the material on Syria was a term paper he was writing as part of a graduate class he was taking. But the stew thickened with the arrests over the next few weeks of two more men at the base with whom Yee was known to have visited socially. Senior Airman Ahmad I. al-Halabi, a translator, was arrested on suspicion of espionage, and on September 29 another translator, Ahmed F. Mehalba, like Yee, was charged with possessing classified information.

The media were dutiful. Official leaks were handed off to the press, and reporters dashed the length of the field to their foregone conclusions. The *L.A. Times* explained that the three ("all Muslims") possessed classified material "possibly to give it to outside terrorist networks." The sensitive ear detects the Freudian overtone in official qualms "that Al Qaeda may have managed to penetrate what was supposed to be an impregnable prison." But the real fears, deep in the hearts of men, may be gleaned from this item, actually printed in Airman al-Halabi's court papers and no doubt included so as to seal his doom:

"While at Guantanamo Bay, al-Halabi made statements criticizing United States policy with regard to the detainees and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East... He has also expressed sympathy for and has had unauthorized contact with the detainees, including providing unauthorized items of comfort to the detainees."

This statement, which was widely reported, does not seem to have attracted the attention of many civil liberties scholars or other antiquarians, but it has implications worth pursuing. It is of a kind with this syllogism, also from the *L.A. Times*: "There are indications that the chaplain, Army Capt. James Joseph Yee, who spent some years in Syria before returning to the United States, may have become sympathetic with the plight of the Muslim detainees." In other words, it is enough merely to have lived in an unapproved country, or to have expressed out loud an opinion that would not be heard on the Evening News with Dan Rather, to lend credence to capital espionage charges against a member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Secret subpoenas at Evergreen

By Mike Coday - October 2008

In the aftermath and investigation of the civil disturbance at the Dead Prez concert at The Evergreen State College (TESC) in Feb. 2008 [in which a Thurston County police car was overturned and ransacked], TESC Registrar Andrea Coker-Anderson was served with a subpoena to turn over student records to law enforcement. The subpoena included a non-disclosure clause that ordered the college not to disclose the subpoena and information request for 90 days. TESC complied with the subpoena and released information on 13 students that included photo identification.

Associate Vice President for Enrollment Steve Hunter revealed the subpoena to students and staff through email on May 30 and stated: "The College is bound by law to provide the information requested by subpoena. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits disclosure, without consent, from a student's records in order to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena. Our standard policy for such requests is to notify the student that a request has been made and to allow seven days for the student to determine if he or she wishes to take action to suppress the subpoena in court before the subpoenaed information is provided. Because of the non-disclosure statement in this subpoena, the College was required to supply the information requested and to remain silent regarding the request until 90 days had passed."

FCC Deregulation

By Matthew Ford
August 2003

The Senate has recently begun the process of reversing recent decisions made by the Federal Communications Commission to loosen media ownership rules, which allow massive consolidation of newspaper and broadcasting mega-conglomerates. Legislation, which cleared the Senate Commerce Committee in mid-June, would put a hold on further monopolization of information by restricting individual corporations from "grabbing" even larger shares of the news "market."

Why should we care? The inaccurate and sensationalized mainstream media coverage of the US military occupation of Iraq manipulated and controlled public opinion through the repetition of false or misleading claims, resulting in disproportionate support. For example, polls carried out before the invasion by reliable sources indicated that 77% of Americans believed that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons and 85% acknowledged a link between Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. Of course these suspect beliefs are not nearly as disturbing as a New York Times/CBS poll that indicated 42% of Americans believed that Saddam Hussein was directly responsible for the September 11 attacks.

However, we would be foolish to believe that these polls suggest that Americans are stupid or ignorant. To the contrary, they indicate a systematic failure of the mass media to convey accurately the information necessary to make reasoned and informed decisions that promote thoughtful, active civic participation.

The main issue is control over information by a few mega-conglomerates that are largely dependent on advertising revenues, and function like any other corporation which is motivated by profits, rather than a desire to educatie the public or present diverse, well-informed opinions.

FRO under FCC threat

By Drew Hendricks and DJ Megawatti
June 2007

Free Radio Olympia (FRO) ceased transmitting its signal over the airwaves on May 22nd to avoid a probable raid by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The interruption of our service to the community will last until a new volunteer steps forward to host our transmitter, accepting the risk of a raid or FCC visit.

Recent FCC harassment has escalated significantly, both statewide and nationwide. The FCC has also recently harassed two other unlicensed stations in Washington State, according to DIY Media's FCC enforcement database.

FRO recognizes that free speech is a right that is denied to the people by the federal government as represented by the FCC and corporate media groups such as the National Association of Broadcasters and its powerful members such as ClearChannel. These corporatists maintain a powerful monopoly over media in the United States and have no interest in providing the public with access to the public airwaves.

FRO opposes the corporate domination of radio, which privatizes what should be a public community service. In addition, we believe that the FCC's recently enacted licensing structure for low-power fm operations has failed to serve the needs of communities, though we love and support KOWA 106.5 fm in its struggle to maintain local low-power operations within the ridiculous broadcast location restrictions they have been assigned by the FCC.

FRO's goal is to provide information and education to the community by offering diverse content including independent and local music, alternative commentary and news programs, and coverage of local events, none of which are made available by corporate radio stations in our area.

We are happy to reprot that Free Radio Olympia is currently alive and well, broadcasting on 98.5 on your fm dial.

The not-so-lost art of billboard reclamation - Photo by hali panneton - Originally printed in the January 1996 issue of WIP

The News Tribune versus Sandy Nelson

Sandy Nelson was an award-winning journalist for the *Morning News Tribune* (more commonly known as the *Tacoma News Tribune*, which now also publishes under the name "*The Olympian*"). In 1990, the owners of the MNT discovered Nelson was spending her personal time working on the campaign to pass a Tacoma city measure protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination. She was reassigned from reporting to copy editing under the pretext that her political activities undermined the paper's objectivity. (Her reporting beat was education; she had never been called upon to report on gay rights issues.) In 1993, with the help of the ACLU, she sued the paper to get her old job back.

By Sandy Nelson
August 1993

I think it's appropriate this case is being filed just before the Fourth of July, because my case is about the right of journalists to enjoy the liberties secured by that first American Revolution. Those liberties include the right to free speech, to free association and to freely organize on behalf of one's interests. It is also significant that I'm filing during Gay Pride Week, because it was my advocacy on behalf of a Tacoma gay-rights ordinance that was management's pretext to remove me from reporting three years ago.

I am here because my employer insists I surrender my constitutional rights in order to preserve my employer's image of neutrality or "objectivity." In other words, I am expected to give up my civil rights to protect their property rights. And I have refused to do this.

I tried to resolve this dispute with the help of co-workers, the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild and community leaders who tried to meet with publishers. Thousands of people from the Pacific Northwest and even other states and countries signed petitions demanding my re-instatement to reporting. Three years of appeals have kept the *Morning News Tribune* from firing me but were ineffective in getting me back to work as a reporter.

I have high hopes this court action undertaken by the ACLU and my attorneys, James Lobsenz and William Bender, will get me back to work where I belong.

I find it ironic that publishers claim to uphold free speech and then try to deny free speech to front-line newsgatherers on the grounds that our activities compromise their "appearance of fairness." But it's more than ironic – it's illegal. It turns the Washington State Constitution on its head and reduces this cornerstone of democratic freedoms to a piece of trade legislation.

My case is about my rights to political freedoms off the job. But it's also about the rights of readers and the obligation of the media to inform the public. When publishers impose edicts against political and community involvement by reporters, they not only violate reporters' rights but also the right of readers to know what is happening in the world. Such edicts are a form of internal censorship; they tailor the news by tailoring the people who report it. They deprive readers of the perspective of reporters who have firsthand knowledge of community issues. They shackle the press by shackling reporters.

My case will expose the lie of "objectivity" and show how it applies only to media workers and not media owners, how it is used to discriminate against women, gay men and lesbians, people of color and political radicals like myself, whose community involvements are a matter of survival, not a hobby. It's important to remember that radicals and gays were the first to be purged from the media and communications industries during the McCarthy era.

Media managers are using reporters as scapegoats for their serious loss of credibility. But people are abandoning the media not because of the off-duty political activities of individual reporters but because "objectivity" as defined by media bosses has created news that is life-less and uninformative, designed to offend the fewest advertisers and reach the most readers.

My case is a test between workers and bosses who would control not just our labor but our thoughts, actions and passions if we let them. My case is evidence of why we need laws protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination – the very law I was working on in Tacoma at the time of my banishment.

This case is critical to all members of the working press who are gagged 24 hours a day while their bosses and publishers freely voice their political beliefs and biases and act politically to further their business interests. I believe journalists should have the same non-negotiable democratic rights enjoyed by publishers.

Two hundred years ago, when the First Amendment was drafted, publishers were the writers and editors of their own pamphlets and journals. Today, publishers control one of the biggest, wealthiest and most influential businesses in the nation if not the world. But today's division of labor between publisher and reporter should not cause writers to lose their rights while publishers exercise theirs.

Finally, this is a fight for the true integrity of journalists and an opportunity to make common cause with readers for a more responsive and responsible media. A free press requires free reporters – now more than ever.

I look forward to a victory in this case that will put me back into a reporting job after three years on the copy desk – a noble profession but not mine of choice.

In 1997, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled 7-2 that the *News Tribune*'s discrimination against Nelson was legal. The US Supreme Court refused to hear her case.

Behind the scenes at the Daily Olympian

By Brendan Funtek
January 2008

Although the three incidents shared little in common, the [Olympian] editorial instructively directed public ire at unaccountable protesters and dismissed [Olympian employee Matt] McVay being shot in the face by an accountable police department. Qualitatively, McVay's incident was far more troubling in concern for the future safety of those employed in the newsroom.

I grimaced looking at McVay's face that night, and I had seen my fair share of bruises, swelling and bad heaviness from friends already that week. What startled me the most about McVay, a man of average height, was that they aimed above his torso. Days earlier, I had seen a good friend get shot at close range with pepper spray pellets at the hip, leg and chest. These were not errant shots; they were methodically spread out so the spray would affect his body. But I noticed the police often pointed the guns below their target's head, even when threatening to shoot.

Could it be that McVay, a cameraman with visibly expensive equipment, a cameraman who filmed such good footage of police attacks in days prior that a personal friend of mine pursuing a lawsuit against the police force had bought McVay's footage to use in court, a cameraman whose face was partially concealed by a camera at the moment of being shot, could it be that he was shot on purpose?

At worst, an executive editor might quietly see what boundaries can be established with a police lieutenant to prevent her workers from being hit again and not bother to inform them. After all, a photographer temporarily blinded from pepper spray or a reporter nervously fixated on a cop's baton is a significant hindrance to your newsroom's goal of witnessing and reporting the news.

With newsroom co-workers, I'm assured [filing charges against the police] will never happen, always astonished to what extent their "objectivity" produces some form of paralytic uncertainty regarding their basic rights like safety.

Internationally, we've seen this comprehension ignored at times by the US military in Iraq. In November of 2007, a The Independent (UK) story stated "one landmark which passed virtually unnoticed was that the Iraq conflict has become the deadliest by far for the media trying to cover it, with more than 200 journalists killed to date."

If the Iraq war stands as a future indicator for what could happen here, then it is essential that some solid communication happen now with police and all press, independent and mainstream. This would provide backbone for the lack of accountability from the police department in this port protest.

The birth of the IMC

By Douglas M. Mackar
January 2000

The Independent Media Center was created this summer in an effort to provide constant, non-biased coverage of the action in Seattle during the World Trade Organization meeting. It is an all-volunteer, collectively run media center operating as an alternative to corporate media and corporate institutions. It serves as a resource for pooling information, creating and distributing finished products, and delivering an accurate message to the public.

The IMC was located in a donated space in downtown Seattle. Journalists, film makers and photographers used the center as a base to work on their own projects, as well as organizing efforts to form a collective, multi-media website which was updated almost constantly in an attempt to provide the most accurate depiction of the events that were taking place. Television and radio broadcasts were delivered from nearby sights, and legal observers used the IMC as a communication center to keep updated about arrests and police activity.

bell hooks on the Million Man March

By Greg Bye
January 1996

Unlike several of her colleagues on the left, including Cornel West and Michael Albert, bell hooks finds little in the Million Man March to be enthusiastic about. In fact, she fears that the march may signal "the birth of fascism" in the United States. Speaking to a full house at the Reed College Commons Building, Portland, OR, on November 18th, hooks stated that the march received so much mainstream media attention because its leaders share important values with the fundamentalist Christian right. Among these are patriarchy, capitalism, nationalism, homophobia, and xenophobia.

The march permeated, said hooks, with a sense of "puritanical moralism." For instance, blacks were vilified for depending on welfare. And this black feminist critical thinker thought that the march's main message to the black community was: the only way for blacks to collectively rise in America is through patriarchal leadership (leaders like Louis Farrakhan) and black national capitalism.

In his speech at the Million Man March, Louis Farrakhan asked people to "separate the messenger from the message." For her part, hooks told the Reed audience that she found this supports patriarchy, capitalism, Black Nationalism, xenophobia and homophobia. According to hooks, xenophobia and homophobia are implicit in nationalism. hooks posited the values Farrakhan supports were major themes of the march, and they overlap with Christian right ideals.

hooks compared Farrakhan as a political leader with Malcolm X. While Farrakhan, she explained, is shunned by non-elite whites, mainly because of his xenophobia, Malcolm X had the ability to get many white folks to support anti-racism struggles.

hooks also found little to be desired in the mainstream feminist movement. Calling it "white power feminism" in her talk, she argued that its major focus is helping individual, mostly white women to gain greater access to economic resources. And, unfortunately, this liberal tendency has largely pushed revolutionary goals from the mainstream feminist agenda. One tragic result, she pointed out, is that there is no effective opposition to an issue that should be in the forefront of the feminist struggle: the federal government's bi-partisan attack on welfare. Welfare, hooks mentioned, is necessary to protect millions of women and children from starvation, due to the United States economy's structural inability to provide enough jobs that can support families.

To challenge the interlocking systems of power in the "white supremacist, patriarchal capitalist" United States, hooks recommended that progressive white people join with people of color and form a movement for revolutionary change. She hoped that a focus of the movement will be to challenge "the ethic of competition." For competition breeds racism (and other sorts of havoc).

A life lived deliberately

Excerpts from Mumia Abu Jamal's commencement speech at the Evergreen State College, as printed in the July 1999 WIP

I feel privileged to address your chosen theme, not because I'm some kind of avatar, but because a life lived deliberately has been the example of people I admire and respect, such as Malcolm X; Dr. Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party; like Ramona Africa, who survived the hellish bombing by police of May 13, 1985; or the MOVE Nine, committed rebels now encaged for up to 100 years in Pennsylvania hellholes despite their innocence, solely for their adherence to the teachings of John Africa. These people, although of quite diverse beliefs, ideologies, and lifestyles, shared something in common: a commitment to revolution, and a determination to live that commitment deliberately in the face of staggering state repression.

These people dared to dissent, dared to speak out, dared to reject the status quo by becoming rebels against it. They lived – and some of them continue to live – lives of deliberate will, of willed resistance to a system that is killing us. Remember them. Honor their highest moments. Learn from them. Are these not lives lived deliberately?

This system's greatest fear has been that folks like you, young people, people who have begun to critically examine the world around them, some perhaps for the first time, people who have yet to have the spark of life snuffed out, will do just that: learn from those lives, be inspired, and then live lives of opposition to the deadening status quo.

Let me give you an example. A young woman walks into a courtroom, one situated in the cradle of American democracy – that's Philadelphia – to do some research for a law class. This woman, who dreams of becoming a lawyer, sits down and watches the court proceedings and is stunned by what she sees. She sees defendants prevented from defending themselves, man-handled in court, and cops lying on the stand with abandon. She saw the judge as nothing more than an administrator of injustice and saw US law as an illusion. Her mind reeled, as she said to herself, "They can't do that," as her eyes saw them doing whatever they wanted to. Well, that young woman is now known as Ramona Africa, who lived her life deliberately after attending several sessions of the MOVE trial in Philadelphia. After that farce, she knew she could never be a part of the legal system that allowed it, and she found more truth in the teachings of John Africa than she ever could in the law books which promised a kind of justice that was foreign to the courtrooms she had seen. The contrast between America's lofty promises and the truth of its legal repression inspired her to be a revolutionary, one that America has tried to bomb into oblivion.

What is the difference between Ramona Africa and you? Absolutely nothing, except she made that choice.

Out of the many here assembled, it is the heart of he or she that I seek who looks at a life of vapid materialism, of capitalist excess, and finds it simply intolerable. It may be 100 of you, or 50, or even ten, or even one of you who makes that choice. I'm here to honor and applaud that choice, and to warn you that, though the suffering may indeed be great, it is nothing to the joy of doing the right thing.

Mumia's speech is reprinted in its entirety at www.olywip.org/20_years

Status of the Rainbow

By Dave Jette
October 1990

The "National Rainbow Coalition" is now nothing more than an extended campaign committee for Jesse Jackson. There is certainly nothing wrong in supporting such an organization: Jackson takes progressive positions on many issues, and he is by far the most progressive politician of national stature. The problem lies not with Jesse Jackson, who has the right to pursue his political career through whatever means he can muster, and cannot be faulted for organizing his campaign committee in a top-down fashion. Rather, the problem is with progressives who attach themselves to the Jackson campaign instead of tackling the far more difficult task of building a democratic, grassroots-based progressive political movement.

In Washington State, the WSRC was founded with the explicit goal of building a fully democratic, independent progressive political organization, and its leaders have all individually desired to work toward this goal. However, our connection with the NRC, albeit tenuous, has served as a crutch for not facing up to the real difficulties we have been having even in maintaining the organization – after all, we are, or hope to be, the official representatives of Jesse Jackson in Washington State! Furthermore, we can't expect to hold onto vital grassroots activists when we are too weak to say to the NRC, "No, your authoritarian functioning is antithetical to what we are trying to accomplish, and we refuse to act as your representatives." This contradiction also manifests itself politically when Jackson takes positions which are decidedly not progressive, such as support for the U.S. military invasion of the Mideast; then, there is strong pressure felt not to take any political stand which might embarrass him.

Building a movement to oppose war shipments

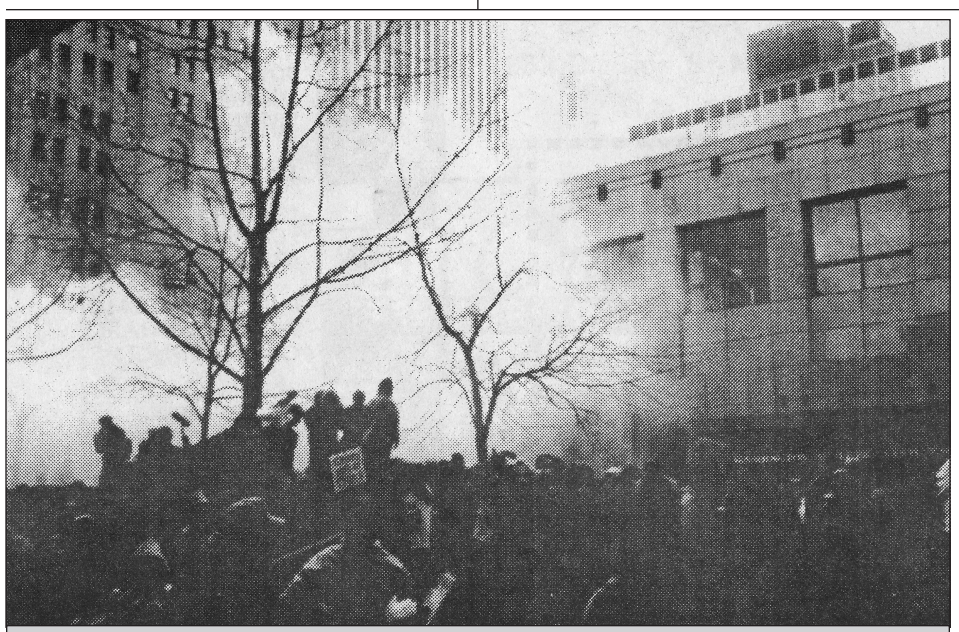
By Peter Bohmer
January 2005

On Friday, November 19th, the local daily newspaper, The Olympian, carried a front page story on the action at the port with pictures of masked protesters and a focus on the $3500 of damage to the fence. This action has led to a strong, healthy and unresolved debate among the anti-war movement in Olympia about the effectiveness and morality of the property damage that occurred. To some extent, there are age and cultural differences among those who supported and opposed the tearing down of the fence. Similar debates took place in Olympia and beyond about direct action versus legal rallies and demonstrations at the WTO protests, which occurred five years ago sixty miles north in Seattle.

Those who argued that tearing down the fence and if possible delaying the ship's departure was a positive and necessary act claimed that this action was non-violent, and dramatically illustrated Olympia's complicity with the US murderous policy in Fallujah and Iraq. Participants in this action want to emphasize and make visible to people in the United States and beyond that the United States government does not represent them, that there is a significant group of people who will not allow US aggression to occur in their name. It is an attempt to raise the social cost of the war by showing through actions the growing forms of resistance that will occur in the United States as the war continues. The participants in this action and its advocates were primarily younger people.

Many of the people over 30 years old and many of the members of the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP), a longtime local group, did not support the property damage. They believed tearing down the fence would become the issue rather than the war. Some members of OMJP believed as a result of the property damage and pictures in the newspaper of protesters wearing bandanas to cover their faces, residents of Olympia and surrounding communities could easier dismiss the movement and ignore the larger issues. They believe what occurred was counterproductive because it will make it more difficult to reach the broader community and build a stronger anti-war movement. One member of OMJP said to me she would support a highly planned civil disobedience where people sat down near the ship but not what happened on November 18th, 2004. There was general agreement that criticisms and debates about the anti-war actions of others should occur face to face and not in the mainstream media.

My position is that actions such as the ones that occurred at the port are necessary as are rallies and vigils. They must take place, however, in the context of and together with a growing movement that is doing outreach and popular education beyond the anti-war movement.



Plumes of tear gas rise up from the midst of crowds during the WTO protests in Seattle, November 1999 - Photo by WIP worker Wendy Ortiz

Jim Hightower barnstorms Olympia

By Dave Zink
February 2002

Jim Hightower brought his down-home Populism, Texas-style to Olympia's Capitol Theater Friday Dec 7, where he emphasized a theme of unity and coalition-building.

In the wake of the tragedies of September 11th, the powers-that-be are wrapping themselves in the flag, posing as patriots, and brazenly seizing the opportunity to ram through tax cuts for a handful of corporations, open up the sensitive Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling, and concocting other schemes to enrich themselves. Tax refunds for the wealthy, while working people are given no meaningful tax relief.

Jim's Aunt Beulah used to tell him that "If you want to clean up the water, you've got to get the hogs out of the creek." The important thing to remember about hogs is that they don't respond to polite language. Asking them to "please get out of the water" just doesn't work. The only way you can get them out of the creek is by getting people to work together to push and pull them out of there.

There are plenty of hard-working, progressive grassroots groups scattered across America working to restore citizen power against corporate domination. Hightower spoke of the need to build coalitions of existing groups and bring these people together. When groups work together, a synergy occurs that exceeds the effectiveness of these people working alone. We need to communicate across geographic, racial, and ideological boundaries. People need to start talking with people on the other side of town. We may not agree with everything. That's OK. Don't demand that coalition members agree on everything. Instead, let's build on common, economic issues, and not allow disagreements on other issues to act as wedge issues that split allies from each other, and render our efforts ineffective.

All-time WIP workers

Chris Allert
Diana Arens
Colby Batts
Tristan Baurick
Barb Bellittiere
Jeff Berryhill
Janet Blanding
Chris Borte
Greg Bye
Gene Cade
Jean Cade
Charlie Calvert
Dave Campbell
Chelsea Chase
Sebastian Chase
Tom Chenhall
Marylea Coday
Mike Coday
Kerry Cooper
Regina Costa
Tom Connelly
Renee Cruickshank
Wally Cuddeford
Megan Davis
Catherine Dawdy
Christian DesMarets
Diane Frank
Lon Freeman
Tom Freeman
Brendan Funtek
Goodman
Ben Gus
Beth Hartmann
Drew Hendricks
Kurt Henneck
Carter Hicks
Steve Hillmer
Frank Hoffman
Greg Hohnholt
Kirsten Holm
Pat Holm
Craig Hymson
Patricia Imani
Kendra Jennings
Teresa Jennings
Dave Jette
Jerome Johnson
Chris Jordan
Kayden
Cat Kenney
Robert Larson
David Lavender
Beth Leimbach
Margaret Love
Matt Love
Zachary D. Lyons
Katherine MacRae
Douglas Mackar
Sarah Maden
Sandy Mayes
Joanne McCaughan
Jenni Minner
Oliver Moffat
Evelyn Montague
Patty Mosqueda
Krist Munson
Annamarie Murano
Joshua Neuhouser
Phan Nguyen
Mike Nichols
Lesley Nobles
Kris Nordberg
Giles O'Dell
Ohana
Wendy Ortiz
Nicholas Pace
hali panneton
Tara Perkins
Carol Poole
Dave Potter
Rob Richie
Dave Ridgeway
Melissa Roberts
Julian Rosielle
Robert Ross
CJ Russo
Marvin Saillard
Megan Selvage
Lisa Serrano
Sandia Slaby
Marie Smith
Sylvia Smith
Jeff Sowers
Chris Stegman
Dorothy Tassoni
Pat Tassoni
Dia Taylor
Ryan Tompkins
Patricia Vázquez
Sasha Vulovic
Berd Whitlock
Amelia Yankey
Scott Yoos
Alice Zillah
Al Zimmerman
Dave Zink

TRADITIONS
CAFE & WORLD FOLK ART
WWW.TRADITIONSFAIRTRADE.COM
FAIR TRADE FEDERATION
300 5th Avenue SW
Olympia 98501
360-705-2819
Store Hours
M-F: 9-6 Sat: 10-6 Sun: 12-5

An Ode to the Dumpster Crew

By Long Hair David - March 2004

I got home after doing my Street Outreach for the night. As most of you who ride bikes know, a guy can get pretty damn hungry, especially on these cold nights.

It's the first of the month and my food stamps don't come in 'til the 3rd; ole Mother Hubbard's cupboards are bare. So I go into my kitchen to find something to eat. At this point I haven't eaten much all day and I'm about ready to eat the hind end off a skunk. All that's left in the cupboard are a few cans of Progresso soup and some black beans; had black beans yesterday, good, and I have two loaves of bread that my friends from the dumpster crew left off for me. They had kicked down a food bag to me a few days before; a nice bag of potatoes, veggies, some bags of chocolates (yum), a few cookies that I ate yesterday. So I heat up some soup, and by now the bread has become just a little bit stale so I do as any decent hobo would - I stick that ole bread down in the soup and just let it soak there for awhile. Yum-mers! So I'm sitting here eating this soup and thinking about what a wonderful meal this is and that, in most third world countries, many people would die for a meal like this. And it dawns on me: "these dumpster crew kids rock!"

Sometimes I like to chew on good bread even after it's a bit on the stale side and it often makes me think of all the food this country wastes and how good this would taste if I only had some jam; I like to just keep chewing on it, and think of the fact that so many in the world don't have something as good and nutritious as this.

You should try it some time while reading a copy of George Orwell's "Down and Out in Paris and London" or Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath." I often like to curl up with a big hunk of some Blue Heron or some San Francisco Bakery; we're not talking supermarket Langendorf white bread here, kids, oh no. We're talking down-home heavy bread that takes some serious chewing.

When I first came to this town I used to work at Bread and Roses (B&R) and, as many of the staff did, we always got our bread from there; B&R always got lots of baked goods donated from both San Francisco and Blue Heron Bakeries. So for many years all the bread I ate came from B&R. Then one day I was shopping down at the Farmers Market and I bought a loaf of Blue Heron bread; went for the good stuff - you know, the presliced kind, 100% whole wheat. So I'm a wandering around the Market and I get a bit hungry, and slide me out a piece of bread to snack on, Wow-Wee Zow-Wee! So that's what it tastes like fresh, man oh man, that was the first time I had Blue Heron bread fresh out of the oven. Kids, I'm telling you, that stuff is really good when it's just minutes old, cooked that morning. Awesome stuff! I had to laugh at my ole cheap ass for never before buying their wonderful bread fresh from the oven; I'm telling ya, kids, that stuff's the real dope!

Well, I think tomorrow I'm going to cook up them veggies and taters and make my own soup, and it's all thanks to those dumpster diving hoodlums, bless their pea-pickin' sweet hearts.

Our contributors

So many of you have contributed informative articles and evocative photos and graphics, we didn't have enough space to include something by everyone, or to even list everyone's names. But work has begun to post every issue through WIP's history to our website, so your contributions can benefit the world, and last another 20 years.

Listen to Olympia Community radio
KAOS - 89.3 fm
KOWA - 106.5 fm
FRO - 98.5 fm

May Day in Olympia

By Tristan Baurick
June 2000

May Day proved to be quite a festive time in the capital city - and quite a surprise for police, shoppers, and commuters. The May Day street party and procession down the main artery of corporate commerce and auto commuting for a full day to bring attention to worker's rights and the evils of global economics.

At noon the rambunctious crowd that had been gathering in the parking lot of Rainy Day Records [then at Harrison and Division] for more than an hour spilled into the streets. Flags, banners, bikes, signs, stiltwalkers, drums, horns, and about 500 enthusiastic Maydayers made up the vibrant procession that marched through the strip-mall lined streets of Olympia's westside.

News helicopters circled overhead while their satellite news vans rolled in, pouring out reporters and camera men in hiking boots, ready for the next WTO warzone.

Behind Top Foods waited a team of black-clad, club wielding riot police waiting for the order to crack down on the party. Fortunately, the order was never given.

Meanwhile, less than two miles away, Olympia's downtown streets rang with quiet. Business owners who had prepared for the worst peered from windows for the disaster that never happened. Talcott Jewelers removed all shiny objects from their window displays in preparation for rioting and looting.

Much of the business community's worry stemmed from a letter circulated by the OPD warning store owners to take actions ranging from video taping their storefronts, programming 911 into office and cell phones, and readying an area of their business where employees and customers could hide out until police could arrive on the scene.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!

We're looking for any and all photos of activism, social justice struggle, and community in Olympia from the last 20 years. We're going to print the best of these photos in a multi-page photo spread in an upcoming issue, and post them to www.olywip.org for the world to see.

Please send them to olywip@gmail.com, highest resolution possible. Also, please let us know if you need help scanning pre-digital prints.

It's the water!

By Friends of Artesians
September 1997

Olympia's artesian wells are a unique gift of nature and a part of Olympia's unique identity and natural heritage. More than 100 artesian well sites have been documented in the greater Olympia area. Only a handful of these wells are in use today. Most have either been capped or diverted into storm drains.

Friends of Artesians are currently working to preserve the popular well located in a Diamond Parking lot on 4th Avenue between Adams and Jefferson streets. Extensive testing of the well's water quality found it to be pristine.

Working with local businesses, the Olympia City Council, state and local regulatory agencies, and other concerned citizens, we want to preserve existing artesian wells, develop new wells at sites within public parks, use the wells as opportunities for environmental education and art, and support common sense regulations that safeguard the pristine quality of our artesian water.

Community Supported Agriculture

By Suzanne Anders
June 1992

Community Supported Agriculture is a popular system for food production and distribution in Europe and the eastern United States. Here's how it works: A family buys a "share" in the farm which then supplies them with weekly deliveries of vegetables in season. For our bioregion, the harvesting begins in late May or early June and continues through November, depending on the weather. The money paid in advance to the farmer is used for operating expenses throughout the year. In effect, this program allows local agriculture in the Puget Sound region to survive by sidestepping the banking and distribution systems that would make more money from the produce than the farmer would.

It is almost like Christmas every week when I pick up my box from Helsing Farms. I receive a bouquet of lovely flowers, freshly picked herbs, and whatever vegetables happen to be ready to harvest. I enjoy eating what the earth provides in its own season. The variety is excellent: lettuces, radishes, onions, spinach, beets, strawberries, peas, green beans, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, squash, basil, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, garlic, cabbage, potatoes, etc. Packaging is minimal; the same box is returned the following week for re-use.

To subscribe to Community Supported Agriculture, contact:

Common Ground - 360-866-9527
Helsing Junction Farm - 360-273-2033

Support our advertisers!

Without our regular advertisers, WIP could never have lasted this long. We encourage everyone who loves WIP to shop at the stores and eat at the restaurants you see here in these pages. And when you do, tell them you saw their ad in WIP!

We also want to give special attention to these three community businesses, who have been monthly advertisers with *Works In Progress* practically since Day One:

Jamie Lee & Co.
Traditions Cafe
Olympia Food Co-op

OMJP is alive and well!

By Sheila Payne
June 1992

The O.M.J.P. has evolved from the Central American Action Committee and from the anti-Gulf War group the Olympia Anti-Intervention Coalition. We have been active in organizing educational events and actions around the issues of Palestine, El Salvador, U.S. economic justice, the farmworkers of Wash. State, and the Quincentennial. We have worked alone, and in concert with other justice, peace, and educational groups.

EGYHOP: making a difference in local lives

July 2005

While there are many homeless outreach programs in Olympia, few do as much to directly help people on the street as The Emma Goldman Homeless and Youth Outreach Project. Every night EGYHOP Outreach Workers are sent on bikes to give needed items (socks, blankets, sleeping bags, etc.) to the homeless, at-risk youth and people living below the poverty line. EGYHOP has given out truckloads of blankets, sleeping bags and over 300 bikes, says Long Hair David, the founder of EGYHOP. EGYHOP is all volunteer run and is based on direct action principles; every donation goes directly to helping people.

EGYHOP riders provide services on the streets of Olympia during hours when the street population cannot access traditional services. They implement emergency intervention services, including referrals to other local organizations.

EGYHOP needs donations of tents, blankets, sleeping bags, large warm clothing, hygiene items, medical supplies, backpacks and camping supplies. EGYHOP's bike project is in need of usable and repairable bikes and bike parts, bike racks, panniers, bike repair tools and all other usable accessories. EGYHOP is covered under Media Island for 501(c)(3) non-profit status and can provide receipts for monetary donations.

EGYHOP continues to serve the street community of Olympia. For more information about EGYHOP, call Meg at 360-786-5255.

Media Island

From an interview of Rick Fellows, founder of Media Island International, by Brendan Funtek
October 2007

RF: I think we at Media Island underestimate how much really good work has come out of there and how much we've accomplished. We look at what other organizations accomplish and maybe they do what they do well but they're biting off a smaller piece of the pie to chew on than we are. Because we're trying to support a wide range of projects. We've got fiscal sponsorship programs, maintaining the house, maintaining the technical infrastructure, upkeeping a library, keeping a kitchen clean and functioning, keeping a radio station going.

We've been in a financial crunch. Summertime tends to be that way for organizations but Media Island has special needs to finance the expenses of a house every month. Sometimes it becomes too much of a treadmill where we're not doing forward thinking. We're not as much able to launch campaigns outside of paying money for the bills. We can do good work. We do a lot of events, films, public speakers and that's how we've been paying the bills.

If Media Island were able to be better organized. If we had more volunteers or if more people could focus more time on it, some of the best spent time would be networking with other media activist organizations and work with them to build more of a movement around media issues.

POWER (Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights) is an organization of low-income parents and allies advocating for a strong social safety net while working toward a world where children and care giving are truly valued, and the devastation of poverty has been eradicated.

POWER Outage is a monthly get-together in Olympia for POWER and community members. It happens on the first Monday of each month, starting at 5:30 pm with a potluck meal, and ends at 8. Children are always welcome. We will have on-site childcare or activities for the whole family.

For more information, email welfarerights@riseup.net, or visit www.oly-wa.us/power/

TC PRO-NET

From www.tcpronet.org

The Thurston County Progressive Network provides communication services, support and education to individuals, businesses and organizations who believe in and work for social, economic and environmental justice.

Our members are many and diverse. They are local business members, from earth movers and attorneys to healers. We have organizational members who work for climate change and for the rights of women. Our many individual members support and participate in a wide variety of progressive causes.

Currently TC Pro-Net has 51 member groups. Besides having the ability to post events to the calendar which is sent out weekly on the Pro-Net Picks, we have a "Member Showcase" feature. Featured organizations are highlighted for a month on the Picks.

Stonewall Youth

By Stonewall Youth
August 2007

On June 6, the Stonewall Youth Speakers Bureau went to Washington Middle School to facilitate a day-long series of conversations about bullying and intolerance in relation to growing up identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or queer. We spoke to six different groups with 120 students in each one, as well as staff.

"It is rare to find younger people concerned with issues involving the community, country, or even the world because voices are shut out and silenced and the ones who do want to have a voice in certain issues aren't always heard. Stonewall Youth Speakers Bureau is an outlet for both the speakers and the people listening because the speakers use personal stories that can't be argued against and the conversations brought up are used to empower people instead of telling them that their opinions and views are wrong and invalid. It is also more of a way to show people that everything in the world affects everybody."

360.705.2738
stonewallyouth.org

A trip to the Co-op

By Ocean
January 2000

Walking among the aisles of produce, snacks, deli sandwiches, and bulk grains and spices, there is more here than there appears. The co-op has product selection guidelines that consider all kinds of things. Is the item produced locally? Were the animals humanely treated? Is there a comparably priced organic option? Is it overly packaged? Are there any reasonable boycotts on the producer? These are the kinds of protracted questions considered around every item here.

On top of carrying organics, locals, and bulk, the co-op promotes low-impact environmental standards by recycling its food waste (compost) and by making clean used bags and containers available for bulk foods. Another consideration that comes into play is variety; not just a wide assortment of foods for a collage of palates, but a gradient of costs to cater to any economic situation.

TULIP Credit Union

By Pat Tassoni
March 2004

After more than six years of community grassroots organizing and cooperative assistance from mainstream financial institutions, the Thurston Union of Low-Income People Cooperative Credit Union (TULIP) has finally opened. TULIP believes that lack of income should not limit one's access to participation. We want to encourage the low-income community to become involved in making a positive and renewing economic impact in the local society. We believe that these values could have far-reaching effects, and could improve the overall economic health of the region for all who live here.

TULIP offers personal loans of up to $2,000, and automobile loans of up to $25,000. They offer credit counseling and advice about the lending process, and will work with their members to find ways to improve their credit and to try to get the loans that best fit their needs. To contact TULIP, email info@tulipcu.coop or visit www.tulipcu.coop/

THANK YOU Olympia, for 20 great years!

Photo by Dan Kapsner

20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

WORKS IN PROGRESS

May 2010 FREE

FREE
May 1990
May 2010

TRUTH ABOUT POWER IS SPOKEN HERE
WIP
WORKS IN PROGRESS